Absolute Duo Volume 3

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アブソリュート・デュオ III

渚に揺れる恋物語り

Absolute Duo

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アブソリュート・デュオ！ III

渚に揺れる恋物語り

Absolute Duo

月見璃兎（つきみりと）

リーリス＝ブリストル

永倉伊万里（ながくらいまり）

穂高（ほたか）みやび

橘巴（たちばなともえ）

ユリエ＝シグトゥーナ

言葉途中で視線が下へ。
自分がどのようなことを
提案しているのか、橘自身も
よくわかっているということだ。

「だ、だからキミの手で、
私のストッキングを脱がして、欲しい……」

「それじゃあ……
脱がすからな」

覚悟を決め、
俺はゆっくりと
スカートの中に手を入れていく。

足を引きずり、脇腹を押さえ、
それでもユリエは剣を払う。
俺のために。俺を護るために。
振るうだけでも、
激痛が走っているであろうに。
けれどその状態での
威力など知れたもので、
斬撃を弾かれてたたらを踏む。

「大人しく待っていなさい。
貴女もすぐに、
彼と同じ場所へ
送ってさしあげますから」

「させません……！
トールは私が護ります!!」

「トールから……
離れてください!!」

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エピローグ

Prologue

"I, wonder what type of person I will fall in love with……..."

The girl-----Hotaka Miyabi was bad with the opposite sex.

It's not like she had an inerasable trauma from her childhood……it's just that she was bad with strangers and shy. Another reason for it was that she went to a girls only middle school the same as her sister.

Because of that, the existence of males of the same age as the middle-school Miyabi only appeared in stories like drama or manga.

But even if she was bad with them, it's not like she had no interest in love.

She had always imagined that she would fall for someone one day------like that.

Even though she was not conscious about this, her head turned completely blank when she saw the target of her affections getting kissed----even though it was just on the cheek. To Miyabi, who has only slowly gotten used to having conversations with a member of the opposite sex, a kiss was a very high level action.

The moment she regained her composure, the criticism that came from her mouth was-------a cute shout calling him a pervert.

Of course, it's not like there were any bad intentions in it and those were the only words that Miyabi could have thought of in her half-panicked state.

However, she encountered a different kind of emotion in her chest when she recalled the event calmly after some time had passed and it had become night time. As if being covered in a haze , those emotions made it feel hard for her to breathe and at the same time made her thoughts heavier.

Thanks to that, Miyabi felt troubled.

(What is this feeling……)

"Miyabi, I'm turning off the lights."

"Ah, un……."

Since she was daydreaming on the bed about the feelings in her chest, it had passed the time for lights out before she knew it, and Tachibana, her roommate and at the same time her <<Duo>>, called out to her.

After Miyabi nodded, Tomoe turned off the lights and the room was covered in darkness.

She closed her eyes. But, the event that happened in the afternoon did not vanish. The image of the boy, who had given her the feelings to make her work harder in Kouryou academy and who was her first male friend, getting kissed.

The haze in her chest would not clear up.

It was there, whether she slept or stayed awake.

The girl-----Tachibana was dense.

Of course, the denseness here was related to the opposite sex----which meant it was related to love emotions.

She could take care of everything other than love in detail, and was good at taking care of others.

Although she was a little hard-headed, she was diligent, social, and was seen favorably by others.

But she was dense.

It was something created from her environment.

Being born into the martial arts family of the Tachibana style, Tomoe had devoted most of her childhood days training to succeed in the family's name. Fortunately she was blessed with the talent for martial arts, and the tough training certainly bore fruit even though it was little by little.

However, that became Tomoe's misfortune. The training of the Tachibana style was to give girls strength.... strength that would make males the same age as them run away barefooted.

Strength was simply something standard to males-----especially teenagers.

The fact of having a girl stronger than them made the teenage males around Tomoe have stubborn hearts. It was so severe that not even one boy could tell their feelings to her even though they had favorable intentions towards her.

If any one of them had been honest, then Tomoe might have been able to discover love.

……Judging from the point of others telling their feelings, there were several times she got letters and chocolates from other girls, but that only made her confused.

Anyways-------as a result of being born into the environment she was raised in, and with that talent, Tomoe grew up without knowing about love. Different from Miyabi, one of the reasons was that she had no chance to touch any works that made her yearn for love.

The trigger for a change of feelings was being treated as a girl by a teenage boy she met in Kouryou academy.

Even though it was not like she fell in love, it was just strong enough to show concern over the boy unconsciously.

It was still a small feeling. Her chest rustled the moment she saw him getting kissed, and she crushed the chance to notice this feeling by shouting about how shameless it was------which was done from beyond her senses.

Even so her story did not stop and still continues on.

Gradually but certainly, she was starting to be attracted to the boy without noticing it.

After a few days passed, the boy------Kokonoe Tooru got discharged from the hospital and was returned back to the girls.

When Miyabi thought about Tooru, her chest ached. It felt itchy and did not calm down.

Strangely enough, those feelings vanished when Tooru actually stood in front of her and she got wrapped in an uplifting fluffy and comfortable feeling instead.

It ***was*** the same thing when Tooru called out to her when she headed to the cafeteria alone during the evening.

---Yes, in past tense.

"Eh……Ah, you are going with Tomoe-chan tomorrow morning……..?"

What Tooru had said was, that he would most likely not join her in morning runs for a while because he was going to learn martial arts from Tomoe starting tomorrow morning.

"Sorry. We promised to have her teach me once the <<Survive> > ended."

Even though he did not make any promise with Miyabi, Tooru felt a little apologetic to her since he ran with her almost every day.

This sudden talk gave Miyabi a shock as she was unconsciously looking forward to running together again starting from tomorrow morning.

---But she swung her head to the side in panic when she saw Tooru's apologetic expression.

"Th-there is no reason for Tooru-kun to apologize. See, it's not like we promised to run together……a-and, you would show your face since it's been a while right? Then, I will run as much as I can and become fast so I can surprise Tooru-kun, fufu."

Miyabi tried her best to smile and Tooru felt saved when he saw that expression.

"I get it. Alright, I look forward to that day…….. the day Miyabi's lap times are faster than mine."

"-----E-eeeeeeeeeeeh!? To-Tooru-kun, don't make such an unreasonable demand ~ "

The atmosphere flowing between them returned back to the usual lively one.

A while after that Miyabi would send looks towards Tooru, who was having fun talking to his friends, several times during dinner and would make small sighs unconsciously each time.

(I see……..With Tomoe-chan, huh……..)

In the end, Miyabi didn't have any appetite for today's dinner and didn't finish her meal.

The night cleared out and it became morning-----

Right in the promenade between the dormitory and the hall opposite, Tooru and Tomoe were facing each other.

"Well then, we will now begin the introduction of the techniques from the Tachibana style."

"I am counting on you master Tachibana."

"St-stop it. It's true that I am going to be the one guiding, but I am still a novice so I can't help but feel itchy if I am being called that."

Tomoe scratched her cheek while looking embarrassed and troubled because of my joke made toward the Tachibana style.

"I'll say this before we start; the contents I am going to teach you are the basics, so plain and simple training will continue. I am sorry, but please prepare yourself for that. If you want a good sword then forge it from the ore, that is the guiding thought in the Tachibana-----"

"Haha, I got told something close to that by my master before. Well, mine was a tree instead of a sword though."

When Tooru talked about the proverb he told to Miyabi before, Tomoe made an agreeing nod.

And at the same time, she had a favorable impression to Tooru who understood the importance of the basics which are easily overlooked and forgotten even though it was a normal thing to do.

"Well then, let's begin. First off please imitate my stances……yes, like that. Then move your leg-----"

The guidance for the body movements started. Even though he was confused at first, Tooru immediately made an understanding nod.

"------Uuun, I am able to understand the shape but, I have to make my body get familiarized to it in order to use it."

After he said that, Tomoe made a small smile while looking at Tooru who was repeating the moves he learned seriously while somewhat having fun.

(Fufu, Looks like he will progress fast at this pace.)

No matter what skills it may be, it took time for the body to really get it. However that time changes greatly by the enthusiasm of the heart wanting to learn.

After a while, the guidance for the next technique-----the way of the eight style's basics started.

"----------That's about it. If you get used to it then you will be able to combine it with the first moves. I'll show you an example. I will now get close to you and you thrust your fist out."

Tooru brought his fist forward towards Tomoe who got close like he was told------and at that moment, Tomoe suddenly spun her body and grabbed his arms before slipping into his chest area.

"And well, this is it. I am saying that I will make a throw here. It 's probably good to add an elbow strike here depending on the situation."

"…….This is the move I lost to during the <<Fist practice>> a while ago, but I see now. The connection between attacking and blocking is amazing."

"It's Ryuusui[3a 1]. Whether it's the movements, way of performing, or attack, all of it will flow within as one. Okay, let's try it out. I will bring my fist forward now, so you try doing the same."

Tooru nodded and dodged her fist similar to her and entered a throwing stance once he slipped into her chest area together with grabbing her hands but-----

He noticed.

Tomoe's big and soft breasts touched his back.

"That's right, that's the feeling. Okay, let's repeat that for 10 times. However, you can put more strength in your arm and pull harder this time."

Tooru's face stiffened.

The breasts behind him would touch harder the stronger he pulled and would make him more conscious about it.

(Hu-hurry up and endddddddddd!!)

Tooru's heart got chaotic from the feeling touching his back.

Tomoe thought something different when she saw Tooru like that.

(Umu, it's a good face. The spirit of wanting to acquire this move as fast as possible is being told.)

"……Okay, since we've gone this way, let's add in 10 more times!"

Tooru shouted in his heart at Tomoe's suggestion.

Like that------Tachibana Tomoe deepened her relationship with Tooru through the guidance of martial arts.

There was someone looking at both of them from the tree's shadows.

It was Miyabi.

She would normally be running outside the school in this time slot by now but, she got curious about Tooru and Tomoe today and took up the unfunny action of peeking like this.

(What am I doing……)

Miyabi made a sigh when she looked at the objectives of her actions.

Even though she was wondering why her eyes wouldn't leave them for some odd reason, she continued looking at both of them without getting any answers and-----

"-----!!"

Suddenly, Tooru hugged Tomoe from the back.

---Of course, it was just a demonstration of the combination of the move and the way of performing it and is completely unrelated

to the male and female relationship, but Miyabi misunderstood that and took a big breath.

It was only when she saw Tooru and Tomoe's positions switch and perform the same------the action of repeatedly bringing their body closer and letting go, that she let go of the breath she had sucked in.

(O-oh I see……That was training……)

*Dokun**dokun* her heartbeat coming from her chest got faster at this surprise.

She took a deep breath to calm it down as much as possible and slowly exhaled. She then repeated this.

Her heartbeat started to calm down and-----

"Haa……."

Miyabi's feelings sank together with that, and leaked a big sigh------she then mumbled this.

"How nice……"

Those were her true thoughts that she had said unconsciously.

It was something pointed to the scene of Tomoe------and Tooru bringing their bodies closer.

(Eh……?)

After she mumbled that, Miyabi felt surprise at her own words.

(Why did I think 'how nice' just now…….?)

Miyabi got bewildered at her true thoughts that had come out unconsciously.

It was impossible for her senses until now to think that hugging a male was enviable.

Rather, it was something that was enough to make her get embarrassed and look away when she saw males and females-----couples bringing their bodies closer in the city.

But even so, Miyabi continuing to wonder why and------the answer came out.

The answer was shown from the words she said unconsciously.

Yes, Miyabi was envious of Tomoe. She understood herself for feeling envious of bringing her body close to none other than Tooru.

And to find what kind of emotion it was, Miyabi applied the knowledge she had in herself before----

(Ah-re……? That means…….I, might have……..)

She got perplexed when she reached the answer.

However, the answer was shown to be correct by the throbbing heart she got just by hearing Tooru's voice.

She wanted to hear his voice more.

She wanted to see his face more.

The embarrassment was enough to make her want to die but, she wanted to run to him and hug him.

No matter if Tooru was the first male friend she had gotten close with, there was no way she would hold that kind of emotion towards a friend.

Miyabi mumbled this.

"So, I love-----Tooru-kun, huh……..."

Like this-----Hotaka Miyabi became aware of her first love.

Chapter 1 『Is It Okay To Wish For It?

Part 1

"Uu,kuh……..."

I narrowed my eyes because of the dazzling sunlight after I opened the somewhat heavy door and got outside.

At the same time, a breeze with a strong smell of salt tickled my nose.

A lot of the breeze got sucked into my chest and when I looked to the outside scenery again-----it was all blue.

Both the sky and the earth were blue.

It was normal for the sky but for the earth------it was strange.

Speaking specifically, it's not the earth but instead it was the ocean. The endless ocean spread out as far as I could see.

Yes, right now I----Kokonoe Tooru, am riding on a boat. Starting today, the first years of the Kouryou academy are heading out to the southern islands on a boat for a 1 week seaside school.

"The smell of salt water is amazing."

I looked back after taking a few steps forward and talked to the girl who was holding my sleeves tightly.

"Are you okay, Julie?"

"J-ja----……..I am okay……."

While the wind was swaying the hair, reaching to her hips, the small girl nodded.

She is my <<Duo>>-----Julie.

She was a girl with transparent like white (Snow white) skin, red (Ruby eyes) opposite to the blue sea, and Silver (Silver Blonde) hair glowing because of the sunlight.

The problem was simple and clear-----it was seasickness.

I heard that her country, Gimle, was an island surrounded by the sea, so I thought she would be okay on the ship. I jumped to the wrong conclusion.

The color of her face looked bad, so I brought her from the cabin to the stern while her legs were unsteady.

Since there was shade at the stern, unlike the bow of the ship, it was the most suitable spot to take a rest.

"It'll be a bit better if it's windy, so let's rest here for a while."

"Ya---……."

After Julie nodded, she leaned against the wall and dragged her hips down before *Petan* sitting down.

"Tooru……Is it okay if I borrow your shoulder?"

"Aah, go ahead."

After I sat beside her, Julie came closer to me. She closed her eyes and looked like she was having a hard time breathing.

"……Are you okay?"

"Ja--. It feels nice outside……"

(Julie being like this is kind of rare……..)

Even though she was small, the silver girl's physical and battle abilities were at the top level of the class.

It would be quite tough for me; rather Julie's winning percentage was higher if she held the <<Double>>, and it was impossible to imagine her current weak appearance.

(……Speaking of which, she looks exhausted lately.)

The summer in Julie's country, Gimle, was cold and the days reaching around 20 degrees were rare. For Japan, where the Kouryou academy is located in southern Kantou, the summer days crossed over 30 degrees once it is passed mid-summer and adding it to her seasickness she turned completely groggy with her stamina exhausted.

"Hn…….Too……ru……*Suu*…….*Suu*……..."

Before I noticed, Julie started to make sleeping sounds.

I could not move thanks to that, but it's probably a good idea to let her sleep like this for now.

Since I don't have any particular thing to do, I just stared at the sea and the blue sky.

(It's summer huh……)

I don't like summer.

I liked it when I was a child, but I started to hate it 2 years ago.

It made me remember about that day-----the day ***that person*** destroyed everything. The day my sister was killed in front of me.

(I still can't reach……..but, I will definitely pierce my fangs into you……..!)

Just a few days ago, I reached << Level 3 III >> from the end of term << <Sublimation ceremony>>. Honestly the moment I achieved the << <Level up>>, I would not deny the fact that it was a little anti-climatic since I was prepared for it to take a longer time.

It was still a fact that I've gotten stronger.

My physical abilities, muscle strength and running power could easily break world records and had reached a level which was impossible in normal reality. I polished my battle techniques with training every day and the strength was enough to make me think that I would not lose unless it was to another <<Exceed>>.

And at the same time, I understood this; even though I gained this much strength, it would still not reach him.

I understood that my <<Power>> now would not reach him, by comparing the overpowering feeling from when I confronted him 2 years ago.

(Even if I can't reach now--------I might manage if I cross << Level 4 IV >>……..)

The << Level 4 IV >> was the level that would bring out the true power of the <<Blaze>>.

If I reach it, I think my fist will reach him.

My anger, hatred and sadness---------

It was at the moment I was staring at the sky while having those various expressions swirling inside me.

Zururi Julie's head slipped off my shoulder.

(-------!!)

For a moment there, I got surprised but-----

"*suu*……..*suu*……."

Julie must be quite exhausted because she did not open her eyes and was sleeping comfortably using my legs as a pillow this time. I patted her head from the thought of wanting to help even just a little bit as I saw her exhausted face.

"Hn…..Too……ru……"

"Ah……..so-sorry. Did I wake you up?"

"Nai……It feels, good……..please do it more……"

I nodded in agreement before continuing patting her head. Her silky silver hair felt good and it felt like silk thread.

After a while, Julie's breathing gradually became well-regulated .

Her sleeping face got softer and I felt happy I could help her this much.

At the same time, I also felt saved too.

Thanks to recollecting the days I passed with Julie, my heart which was rampaging because of him turned calm.

"Thanks, Julie……."

When I patted her head while mumbling that, Julie rubbed her head from the ticklish feeling.

(I have to be careful not to move or else I'll wake her.)

I raised the side of my mouth while looking at the silver girl sleeping comfortably.

After a while in this position-----

Gachari the sound of the door separating the cabin and deck was heard opening.

It was Hotaka Miyabi who showed up. She was my classmate with a shy personality but **there was a part on her body which emphasized its large size.** …….I will never tell Miyabi which part of her emphasizes largeness.

"Yo Miyabi, did you come to feel the wind too?"

"Eh, ah, erm, I thought you two weren't showing any signs of returning, so……..."

"So you got worried and came to see Julie huh?"

"U-un…….It's a different meaning, but it's correct but……."

"Different meaning?"

When I asked about the reply she whispered out, Miyabi looked panicked for some reason.

"-----Uh!! E-eerrrr, Lo-look, I just thought that it would be dangerous if she fell into the sea!!"

"It's going to be okay, it's not like she staggers that much. Well, thanks for worrying."

"A-ahaha……Mo-more importantly, is Julie-chan asleep……?"

"----uh!! Tha-that's……"

I completely forgot about Julie using my lap as a pillow.

While getting panicked from Miyabi pointing that out, I told her that it became like this after I lent my shoulder to Julie who got seasick.

"*Giggle*. So that's the reason why you can't move."

"Well yeah……by the way Miyabi, are you going to be outside for a while?"

With things settled without any strange misunderstandings, I made a relieved sigh while asking her.

"Eh…….? I-I guess I'll do that. The air outside is nicer anyway……."

"I see. Then let's talk. I need company."

"……..U-un."

After she nodded, Miyabi was about to sit down with Julie in between.

"It's going to be hot if you sit there because the sun will hit you so, why don't you come over here?"

"Ah……Tha-that's true……..Err, So-sorry for the bother……."

It was not long since she had gotten out of the cabin, but it was probably already hot for her.

I advised Miyabi whose face was a little red, to sit besides me.

Even though she nodded and sat next to me, I felt that it was very like her in a way because she left a 50 centimeter gap between .

"Now that I think about it, it's been a long time we talked like this."

"T-that's true……."

More specifically Julie was also with us but, I wondered how long it had been since we had talked alone.

When I tried recalling back, I felt that there was almost no time over these last few months------ever since I stopped showing up for the morning runs.

If there was anything, we would converse when the usual groups gathered and it's not like we didn't talk to each other since we often ate meals together.

"This morning……..with Tomoe-chan too?"

"Aah, it's almost every day."

Tachibana didn't have to be with me regularly, since the main thing in the morning training would be to repeatedly practice the basic forms with my body before using my head to think. But, she showed up every day to conduct a Kumite[3b 1] for the last 10 minutes-----Tachibana would do the attacking while I focused on defense------because she said it was faster to master it this way than to only focus on the Kata.

"I see. Every day, huh……."

"Aah. She's a great help."

Although Miyabi said ***that's good***, I think I am imagining it but she looked somewhat lonely.

"If Miyabi is okay with it, why don't you join us? Tachibana would probably welcome you too."

"……..Uun, I guess I'll pass……..See, I have to gain stamina instead of techniques now anyway."

"I-I see……."

I couldn't say any more since she made a somewhat troubled expression.

(Things don't go how I want them to huh…….)

Actually, Miyabi had been acting strange recently.

She would immediately look away when our eyes met, absentmindedly thinking about something, and it felt like her movements and actions had something behind them.

But, I had some idea regarding the reason why.

Miyabi probably felt inferior to us when she failed to achieve the <<Level up>> during the-----<<Sublimation ceremony>> that everyone in the class received at the end of term semester.

If it was about the usual faces then, Tatsu also failed the sublimation and remained at << Level 2 II >> but, he did not mind at all and it's probably because of his personality.

In any case, it felt bad to have a timid relationship with a friend.

"Hey, Miyabi. If you have something bothering you, you can tell me?"

"Eh……?"

"I told you this before right. It's better to let it out, if you think it 's tough. I think it's okay to tell Tachibana if it is awkward to tell me. She is also worried."

"Ah……..U-un. Thank you……..Eheh, really thank you, Tooru-kun."

Miyabi said this after raising the both sides of her mouth.

I probably lightened her feelings a bit.

Or she might just be acting tough to avoid making me worry.

I could not judge which one it was, but if Miyabi confided in me then I would do my best to assist-----that was what I thought.

“The-then ca-ca-can I request for one wish……?”

“Aah, if it is something I can do then say it.”

“……..Ca-can I……..borrow your shoulder…….”

“Shoulder?”

Even though there was only one meaning for that case but, I asked back just in case.

It’s because those words were hard to think to have come from Miyabi who was bad with males.

Just when I was wondering what the answer would be-----Miyabi moved her head vertically with a clear red face.

“It feels comfortable here so, I got a little sleepy and that’s why, I won’t ask as much like what Ju-Julie-chan is doing so, I thought I could ask you to borrow your shoulder for a while…….”

It was probably very embarrassing because, Miyabi lowered her sights and fiddled with her finger tips while saying the reason.

“I, can't…….?”

"N-no, it's okay. If something like my shoulder is okay with you, then use it."

I got a little embarrassed and agreed to her since there was no reason to refuse.

"U-un, Thank you……..but, something like that …… that is not true you know……..?"

I have no idea what she meant by that. Even though I was thinking about that question------

"Ex-excuse me……"

The 50 centimeter gap turned into 10 and once Miyabi placed her head on my shoulder, the thoughts I was thinking just before vanished.

"……..."

It's warm. Miyabi's body temperature was being transmitted from the touching body parts. And at the same time, the heartbeats coming from my chest got a bit faster and my body creaked.

(Thi-this is kind of nerve wrecking……)

Honestly speaking, this situation was very embarrassing.

But, I just thought that she was relaxing around me more than I expected. I was happy that we became great friends, which was enough for me to be unable to perceive her usually poor interactive skills with the opposite sex.

(…..Nonetheless, I think it is going to be annoying if someone sees us here like this.)

After I made a small sigh, I stared at the horizon separating the blue sky and blue sea while starting the image training of the moves Tachibana taught me……rather, it felt like my nervousness wouldn't settle down unless I thought of something else.

Even though I did that image training, I would be wary of Miyabi each time she exhaled or made any slight movement and the training was interrupted several times; this became a difficult situation.

Nearly an hour passed after that.

[Oi, Tooru, the rabbit woman is calling us to gather-----][------Uh !!]

The steel door opened and Miyabi jumped up the same time the voice called out to me.

"What are you all doing……."

[I-ya,hahaha……][Ahaha……]

In a tired manner------he was probably tired-------a small boy with glasses made a sigh; it was my friend Tora.

"To-Tora-kun. What did Tsukimi-sensei say…….?"

Miyabi asked with a tone which I don't think is possible from someone who had just woken up.

"There is something she wants to say about the seaside school so, I was told to call the people that went out to the deck."

"I get it……Julie, wake up. It seems Tsukimi is calling us for something."

When I slightly shook her shoulders, Julie woke up. However, her consciousness was still probably in dreamland. Even though she raised her body, she was still in daze with her eyes half opened .

"Had a nice sleep?"

"Ja----, thanks to you. Thank you very much, Tooru."

"It's nothing much. How about you Miyabi?"

"……I-I, err……even though I was the one that asked you to borrow your shoulder, I-I was too nervous, so not at all……."

Miyabi told me she did not sleep and lowered her glance while her cheeks were blushing.

No wonder she woke up immediately when Tora appeared.

It was probably better if I hadn't said it was alright when she asked to borrow my shoulder.

(It looks like both of us were nervous.)

It was probably tough for Miyabi who was in the world of drowsiness, but it was a little funny when I think that both our feelings were the same.

"Okay okay okaaay, is everyone here?"

Our evil homeroom teacher, who was unfit to be a teacher, was wearing a maid outfit with rabbit ears and spinning around in the room.

"Alrighty then, this ship will reach the island soon The kids that went out to the deck saw the island right♪ So, please get ready to get off since the ship is going to stop♥ Also, everyone's belongings got deliciously------not that, the staff has already transported them so relax♪"

Essentially this seaside school was a training camp to commence survival training which could not be done on the premises of the academy. Because of that, there was quite some danger accompanying it so there would be 5 <<Exceed>> << Level 3 III >>----- Kouryou graduates with survival techniques as their expertise acting as the support staff.

"Tsukimi-sensei. Even if they join in as members of the staff, there is no way we can make our seniors carry our belongings."

The girl with long beautiful hair-----Tachibana commented to Tsukimi with a dignified voice. Those thoughts were very like her because of her honest and serious personality.

"Don't mind, don't mind. That is their job too♪ More importantly I will be distributing these, so come over here when I call your names out"

After saying that, Tsukimi raised a watch-like object above her head.

"What is with that?"

Tsukimi once targeted our lives. However, since I was made to hide that fact in front of our classmates, I asked a question politely.

"It's the armband with an emergency signal switch and light attached to it Only push it when it is really bad okay? Seriously do it when you are about to die♪ Okaay?"

The cabin got noisy in an instant. Was this camp that hard to have such a thing prepared?

However, when I thought about this carefully, it was probably going to be a quite a tough one the moment <<Exceed>> staff came with us.

After receiving the armband, she told us to wear it at all times until the seaside school ended.

And after everyone wore their armbands, we left the cabin when the ship had already stopped but------

"…….Hey, Tsukimi."

"Add Sensei."

"Why didn't we land-----Desuka!?"[3b 2]

Everyone that was out on the deck was dumbfounded.

It was only normal. It's true that we could see the island……it's just that it's a few kilometers away.

"Which means you have to swim♥"

"From here----Desuka!?"

"Of course, with the clothes you are wearing now too♪"

"While wearing our uniform----Desuka!?"

"Sounds tough to have a second personality huh, <<Irregular>>……."

You have no right to say that.

"Okay with that said, we will now begin the swimming training with your current clothes for this seaside school♪ Once you reach the island, please head to your respective training spots located in the middle of the island"

Naturally there were some who raised their shock at Tsukimi's announcement, but this was exactly the way Kouryou academy works.

The battle training, emergency medical treatment, survival and etc were------ different from a normal high school; this was the curriculum for a special battle technique school.

Swimming with our clothes like this was one of them, and it was a skill that had just been taught last week.

The action of swimming with our clothes on was unexpectedly tough and it was so tough that it made me, who had confidence in my stamina, hate raising my body after finishing just one kilometer of swimming.

It was completely unexpected that we would be using those techniques we just learned suddenly at the seaside school.

"This is something you master better if you do it with the will not to die. Good luck and work hard, kuhaha."

Tsukimi showed her real personality with a voice the other students could not hear and made an evil smile.

(So that is why our seniors carried our belongings huh? Now that I think about it, she did say the boat would stop instead of land……..)

After I made a big sigh, I prepared myself.

Part 2

"……..Did you call me?"

The teenager with arrow-like eyes spoke when he anticipated that the old man would finish moving his hands.

"Fuhaha, sorry to call you at a busy time like this."

"No, the mission given to me is to obey you."

The teenager continued his words with a emotionless voice.

"So your business?"

"Umu. Just as you know, the <<unit>> has finished its adjustments and has been spread to a few teams. The last thing would be to advance to the final stage but-----before that, there is something I want. So with that said I want to borrow your power to obtain it."

"What kind of material do you wish for?"

The old man replied with three answers to the teenager's question.

"I don't mind since I would get one soon anyways.--------of course, it would exceed the one <<Diabolica>> has though."

"……Aiming too high is fine but, the disappointment if we are unable to obtain it will be big."

"That's true. Fuhahahaha!"

After the old man finished laughing, the teenager opened his mouth.

"Well then, please give the permission to report to the higher ups of the plan we just------"

"No need. Those fellas would want to know the <<Power>> of the <<Unit>> too anyways. Let's just say this plan is just a test and report only the results."

"……Understood."

The young man did not raise his objection and obeyed the old man's decision.

He then made a slight smile before----asking.

"To evaluate or to be evaluated huh……I understand. How about the operation name for this?"

The old man laughed----before replying.

"<<Selection>>----I guess I'll call it that."

Chapter 2 『The Time For Disaster, huh

Part 1

Our classmates jumped into the sea one after another and we were the only ones left on the ship.

"Okay, I will jump in first so follow me after I do that. I will go right to you so, please rest assured. Remember to grab my shoulders when you surface."

"U-un……I am counting on you, Tomoe-chan."

Miyabi and Tachibana were discussing their actions after they enter the water.

On the opposite side, Tora and Tatsu were-------fighting as usual------and were making a ruckus about a match of who would swim to the shore first.

(Ya-re Ya-re, I don't know if they are close or bad with each other as usual……)

"Fufun. Don't think you will win against me with swimming, Tatsu, Tooru!!"

"Eh, me too!?"

"What are you surprised for, it's normal."

"Is it normal……?"

The rabbit ear homeroom teacher talked to me with a grinning smile.

"Oi oi, now is the only time you can act happy and talk about matches you know? That's because the current around here is complex. You will meet pain if you take it easy-------rather, feel the pain, Kuhahaha."

(I'll give up taking him as an opponent. And I mean everyone.)

We got tired of those disgraceful words from a teacher (as usual) and decided to head out.

Tora, Tatsu and next Tachibana made a magnificent plunge which was so good it made me think they might have been in the swimming club during their middle school years. However-----

(……I saw something.)

Since we were going to swim with our clothes on, which meant the clothes everyone were wearing now would be------our school uniform.

Thanks to that, I could vividly see the inside of Tachibana's skirt from the boat when she jumped off.

"To-Tomoe-chan, I am coming."

Just when I was thinking of a way to delete that vivid memory, Miyabi jumped in this time.

Different from Tachibana, she pushed down her skirt girlishly and *Pyon* jumped in from the stairs feet first.

However, since she only pushed down the front part of her skirt , I could see from behind and-----

(……I saw something again.)

Let's forget it. I did not see anything.

Don A water column was produced and Miyabi's face popped out from the sea surface after a while.

"Miyabi are you okay?"

"Un, somehow I guess……?"

*Splash**Splash* Miyabi dog paddled to Tachibana before placing her hand on her shoulder.

Since Tachibana learned an old swimming method, used when a person wore armor because it is a step towards mastering her martial arts, it looked like she was taking it easy even though Miyabi was holding onto her.

"Just as expected. Well then, we------wait, now that I think about it Julie. You were resting when we were swimming with our clothes on last week but, are you going to be alright suddenly?"

When I recalled and asked Julie who took a rest during the previous water training because of her bad condition-----

"It's okay…….I think."

Even Julie would show uneasiness like I thought.

Well I think she would most probably be alright if it is Julie.

"Okay, let's go."

"Ja---"

Doboon a flashy landing sound was produced and I entered the sea from the tip of my toe to my head.

It felt good in the sea for my sunburnt skin but, my uniform was sticking to me making it hard to swim.

I felt this during training but, the water resistance of normal clothes was different from a wet suit making me lose stamina excessively. This was something I knew already, but it will be quite hard to swim to the island in this condition.

When I showed my face on the sea surface, the refreshing sight of the blue sea and white clouds expanded in my view. And after I took a deep breath while looking at the summer scenery, there was a voice coming from above my head.

"Tooru, I am coming."

With the sun at the background, after Julie stood at the Ship's fence-----she jumped into the sea.

The form was magnificent and it would not lose to what Tachibana did just now. Not only me but Tachibana and Miyabi also raised a voice of admiration at the appearance of her diving into the sea like a mermaid.

Toboon a sound was produced and the silver girl entered the sea together with a small water column.

(As expected from Julie)

That jump made me think she has no other bad skills other than writing literature----limited to only Japanese.

(No, she is bad with boats too.)

When I apologetically shook my shoulders at the new information about Julie I found out an hour ago----

"…….Err, Tooru-kun."

"Julie isn't coming up though……..."

"Eh……..?"

Although I checked the area to confirm their words, there are no signs of Julie showing her face on the sea surface.

""""……..""""

There was an additional 5 seconds of silence & standby.

"Julie----------!?"

"*Cough*, *Cough*……!!"

I grabbed Julie's arm when she was sinking into the darkness and brought her back to the sea surface.

After she came up to the surface, Julie breathed in oxygen filled with the smell of salty water.

After she repeated breathed wildly while grabbing hold of my shoulders, I talked to her as soon as she calmed down.

"Are you okay, Julie."

"Ja-Ja---……..Thanks to you I somehow managed…….. Thank you very much, Tooru……"

"But even so, it is kind of unexpected that Julie can't swim."

"Sorry. There was no custom to swim in Gimle……."

I agreed when she told me that. It is probably unthinkable to swim in the seas or rivers in a cold country like Gimle. Judging by the way she put her words, I could guess there are no warm water pool facilities there.

"I thought I could managed if I learned by imitation, but it was no good. Whether it's the seasickness earlier or just now, I have been only causing problems to Tooru today……"

I made a lively smile to Julie who dropped her shoulders in disappointment.

"Don't worry about something as small as that. We are a <<Duo >> so helping each other is normal……well, even if we weren't a < <Duo>>, I think I would still want to save Julie."

"*Giggle*. That goes for me too, Tooru. But even so, the sea water really is salty huh. I know this already but, I never would have thought I would confirm it in this way."

I could only laugh at Julie's sentence.

"Alright, we have to head to the island soon. We will lose to Tora and the rest if we take our time. Julie, I will carry you on my back from this point on."

"Ja--- Thank you very much. By the way Tooru."

"Hn?"

Even though I failed the start dash from an unexpected trouble, I thought I should still be able to make a recovery-----that was what I thought……..until I heard the next sentence.

"Where are Tora and the rest?"

"Heh……..?"

I checked the surroundings thinking that there should not be that much of a distance made when I saw Julie tilting her small head-----

"Ah-re?"

It was not like there was a distance made.

It's true that that the distance between us is very big but, Tora and the rest did not move much from the boat.

Which means we were the ones that got separated from the boat .

"This------we got washed away?"

It probably happened when I dived down to save Julie.

"…….Now that I think about it, she told us the water currents were complex here."

"Yeah there was that talk before……what's more, it seems we are still being washed away. It looks like distance between here and the ship is getting bigger even at this moment. Looks like it's going to be tough heading back there……."

"Sorry, Tooru……."

"Don't worry about it. It's not like the island got further away. Lets head there while watching out not to counter the current. Julie don't let go of me, okay?"

"Ja---"

Before I started swimming, Julie made a hand gesture to Tora and the rest that we would be heading to the island like this.

After a while, Tora and the rest separated from the ship and headed toward the island.

I confirmed that and we started to move too.

40 minutes might have passed since I started swimming.

I could hear nothing but the sound of the waves and my breathing.

Julie was keeping quiet. It's probably in consideration to avoid causing any burden to me who was swimming.

(I guess there is 1.5 kilometers left to the island maybe? Just a little bit more……..)

The moment I thought that---------

*Bara**bara**bara*…….The sound of a helicopter mixed with the sound of the waves.

It was just passing this southern sea--------there is no way that is the case.

I knew who that helicopter belonged to.

"To--------o------ru-----♪"

In the door of the helicopter hovering about 30 meters above us, a girl leaned forward and waved her hands.

Yellow Topaz
Lilith=Bristol. With her blonde hair swaying, the girl looking at
Sapphire blue
me with those blue gemstone eyes that makes one think of a deep sea, was an Ojou-sama that transferred to Kouryou academy 2 months ago from UK. She is a little selfish but has a lively personality; she is also the owner of a <<Unrivaled blaze>> like me and because of that, she is an existence called <<Exception>> but……..actually, she was someone I am bad with.

"Sorry. For. The. Wait-------Chuu♥"

Lilith raised her voice to avoid getting it erased from the sound of the helicopter and threw a kiss over to me but------

"……."

I moved my head for some reason.

"Hey, Tooru---!! Why did you dodge my kiss of love!?"

I got scolded.

---Back to what I was saying, those words that came from Lilith' s mouth just now were the reason why I'm bad with her.

Yes, this gold girl has taken an odd liking to me and would actively show her favors to me------incidentally, she has no hesitations in declaring me as her future partner. What's more, she would do things like link our arms every time, and those intentions for physical contact are extremely problematic for a young man like me.

"Tooru--, can you hear me!?"

"Ah……Sorry--, I did not hear you!!"

"What did you say!? Ah—mouu. Enough, I will go there now so wait there for me!!"

"O-ojou-sama!?"

Her butler Sara showed panic at Lilith's announcement.

"…….!? ……!! ……..!!"

The gold girl did not listen to her butler who was shouting in disorder and-------started taking off the clothes she was wearing.

"Wait, Eeeeeeeeeeeeeeeehhhhhh!?"

Although I was surprised and shouted, since her body with excellent proportions was wearing a swimsuit, I *Hoou* made a sigh.

“Wait, what are you planning to--------!?”

Even though I shouted, I knew what she was going to do. I knew it but, I still shouted.

“Wait for me, Tooru. I am heading there now-----♪”

The gold girl winked and threw her body to the sky without any hesitation like she was in a diving contest.

---late by a moment, the gold arrow pierced into the sea.

“Hi, Tooru♥”

After some time pass, Lilith floated right near us.

"…….Yo, Lilith. Sara looks very upset up there you know ……."

"It's okay it's okay. I told you this before, but that girl is a little too overprotective."

No matter if she is an <<Exceed>>-----who just became << Level 3 III >> from the <<Level up>> like me a few days ago-----but still nonetheless, I think it is a little pitiful to call her overprotective when you jumped into the sea from the helicopter that high up.

When I looked up thinking that, Sara's and my eyes met and she was glaring at me.

(It's not my--------I guess maybe it is my fault…….)

Without a single care to her butler's condition, Lilith sent a hand sign telling her to head to the island first.

The helicopter headed to the island not long later but, Sara was grinding her teeth while glaring at me to the end. Thanks to that, it feels like I could hear the sound of her teeth grinding which was supposed to be inaudible to me.

"Haa……..just what were you thinking to make you jump into the sea."

"Isn't it obvious that I want to be with Tooru. More importantly , why are you sticking that close to that girl?"

Unsatisfied------rather, she is unsatisfied I guess. Lilith looked at Julie.

"……..I can't swim"

"Well, that's it. I have to support my partner as a <<Duo>>"

"…….As a <<Duo>> huh?"

Lilith narrowed her eyes as if she wants to say something.

"Then, I will also receive support as your future partner♪"

Faster than her words, she rode on my shoulders.

"Wait a second Lilith! You can swim, right!?"

"I cramped my legs."

"Like hell I would believe you when you have that easy expression on!!"

"……..You will burden Tooru. Please don't count on Tooru if you can swim."

"Oh my, that goes for you too; you won't be bothering Tooru if you learn to swim immediately you know?"

The gold girl replied back easily towards the discontent silver girl.

Julie tightened her grip.

(Again huh…….)

After Lilith enrolled, this type of rivalry between them had already occurred many times.

The reason was because of the claim of the gold girl wanting to make me her <<Duo>>. It seems because of that one sentence, an alert signal was being issued inside Julie that there might be a chance I might get taken away from her.

Thanks to that, she would often flare up against Lilith's actions and words, like what was happening right now.

However, since Lilith doesn't show any concern of it and her leisurely attitude does not crumble at all, I think it's okay to say it's lucky if it will not reach a big quarrel.

Personally in my mind, I felt that Julie holding onto my clothes tightly to avoid letting me get taken away was a little cute but, it's fundamentally a way to mediate them.

"Haa…….I get it I get it. Julie, you aren't causing any burden to me so it's okay. That's why, Lilith it's okay to hold on to me like that."

"Tooru……."

"……It's okay. I like causing trouble for Tooru but, this type of trouble is not good. Sorry to be so selfish."

After she said that, Lilith *Topuun* dived into the sea and------showed her face a few meters ahead.

"Tooru. Let's have a competition to see who reaches the island first as a mood refresher."

"……But I am carrying Julie."

"It's a handicap, a handicap♪ Isn't that okay since your opponent is a girl. Ready, Go♪"

"Wha!? Tha-that's dirty!! I didn't say a single word that I would accept the match!!"

She might have not heard me or she was ignoring me (most likely the latter) and, Lilith started swimming toward the island.

(Whether it's Lilith or Tora, why are there so many people around me that are this combative?)

Although I sighed after seeing the gold girl take the lead, I do not hate that type of aspect.

"Tooru, what are you going to do?"

"Let's see……..losing is annoying, so let's chase her. Hold on tight."

"Ja----♪ I will not let go."

Around 20 minutes passed since I started swimming after Lilith ----

With the endless repetition of the waves as my BGM, I am currently collapsed at the beach while making a 大 sign.

"Good work, Tooru……..."

"It is my overwhelming win, Tooru♪"

"I-I completely forgot I was in my uniform."

What's more my opponent was wearing a swimsuit unlike me; there was no way I could do anything.

"But, it is quite amazing that you finished swimming with that speed without resting……..I might not be able to get much sleep if I have Tooru as my husband I think?"

What are you talking about.

"So, what are we going to do next? Rest for a while?"

"Sorry. Let me do that……..I can't move now as expected……..."

After she heard my words, Lilith *Pupuu* spurt out before saying [You worked too hard] and laughed.

"Understood, Tooru…….having a rest would help me too."

I got curious why it would help Julie too, and asked what she meant-----

"It feels disgusting because my clothes are wet……..especially my underwear."

"If that is the case, then I guess I will rest until Julie's clothes dry off."

"Ja---. Thank you very much."

The silver girl nodded------and put her hands inside her skirt.

[Julie!?][Wha-what are you doing!?]

"Ah…….So-sorry….*Hyau*"

I quickly looked away just when her underwear was about half-way taken off.

The last scream was most likely because of the coldness when she put it back on.

"I will go dry it off at the shadow of the rock over there."

After Julie said that, she disappeared to the rock------the moment I thought that, her face popped out from there.

"You can't come over here, Tooru."

After saying that, she hid her lightly blushing face behind the rock again.

"…….Is that girl an airhead?"

"Well, a little……"

Thanks to that, crazy things would sometimes occur in my normal life, but I was not careless enough to let that slip out of my mouth.

"Fuun……."

"A-alright, I guess I'll take a small afternoon nap."

I closed my eyes to run away from the sights that seemingly want to say something.

"Oh my, are you going to sleep? You are quite a blockhead to choose to sleep without having a fun strawberry talk with a swimsuit beauty alone at the beach."

"That's because sleeping is the best way to recover stamina. Sorry but, let me sleep for 30 minutes."

"Okay, It's alright. Then I will------"

Fuu……..a shadow suddenly appeared.

"Lilith?"

When I opened my eyes, Lilith sat down to interrupt the falling sunlight and looked at me as if she was peeking in.

"It's somewhat easier if there is something blocking the sun, right?"

"A-aah……..but won't you be hot……?"

Today's sunlight was strong and the blazing hot sun shining down was burning the skin.

"I don't mind for 30 minutes. I just want to let Tooru to have a good rest."

"……I am happy for those feelings but, the sorry feeling is stronger as expected."

"I am doing this because I want to anyway, so it is not something Tooru has to worry about. I've got sunblock on too anyway……..but if you are still worried about it then, I guess I'll have a gift of gratitude."

"What should I do?"

When I asked back, Lilith placed her finger on her lips and made a charming mischievous smile.

"A good morning Ki-ss♪"

"----!?"

"An advance payment is alright too you know?"

Her hair brushed my ears and Lilith's lips got closer.

Those red lips that make one think of a rose.

“It’s okay, really, it’s okay! I don’t need any shade as expected! I ’ll just accept only those feelings!!”

My eyes were stolen by those lips for an instant, but I immediately regained my composure and turned my back to Lilith .

I got expose to the sunlight because of that and since I was going to fall asleep like this in the first place, I gave up having a blind over me.

My heart was *dokun**dokun* beating hard. Although I knew it was going to be alright, I was worried that Lilith might hear it.

“Mouu [3C 1], Tooru-kun you are so shy♥”

Even though I heard chuckling from her, I continued closing my eyes and didn’t reply to her.

She then made some shade for me again.

“……..I won’t give you a kiss.”

“It’s okay. Instead, I get to keep Tooru’s sleeping face all for myself♪”

“Hey you…….”

“I can’t?”

Honestly speaking, having my sleeping face get seen by a girl is embarrassing------but, I felt that this much was alright; maybe because I was too tired or because I accompanied the girl called Lilith.

"I get it……..Thanks, Lilith."

"I don't mind. Don't make me say it twice, my husband♥"

After a while, I woke up and most of the tiredness was out of my body and my clothes were almost dried off.

"Now that I think about it, why were you late?"

Right when Lilith was talking nonchalantly, I asked the question that suddenly popped into my mind.

Even though she had some distance with the other classmates, Lilith had completely blended into the class now because she was unexpectedly sociable and Tachibana chipped in after <<Survive>>. There was no way she would think of not wanting to go together but……

"I got left behind when I was picking my swimsuit. Seriously mouu, waiting for 1 hour at least is okay right? I wonder what they think about the <<Exception>>"

(So that is why you were wearing a swimsuit under your uniform…….)

Lilith might have seriously thought that she could ease off on the clothed swimming after doing that.

(No no, we are going to train so wearing a swimsuit is bad.)

But since she managed to finish her clothed swimming training properly, it is okay to think that she has already understood the technique and there should not be any problems.

Incidentally, the boat departed following the strict schedule without caring if the <<Exception>> Lilith was late or not. Tsukimi said [The Ojou-sama would probably come later with her helicopter] and laughed; her prediction was beautifully on the mark.

It happened then-----when I was making a small wry smile when I recalled that.

"Ah……!!"

A small scream echoed from the rocks.

When I looked over thinking what happened, a white bird flew towards the sea and Julie was extending her hand towards it.

"What happened, Julie?"

After I got near her and asked, Julie told me about what happened in a somewhat fidgety manner.

"Tha-that's……my underwear got blown away by the wind……."

"Huh……..?"

I opened my mouth blankly at the unusual reply and looked at the white bird again-------rather, it was just right about the time I saw her underwear fall into the sea. Her underwear got swallowed by the waves just like that and could not be seen anymore.

""……..."""

I returned my sights back to Julie and she was holding the sides of her skirt tightly.

(Which means, she isn't wearing------)

"Tooru. It's not good to stare."

Julie's cheeks were faintly blushing, her eyebrows were slightly frowning and she was staring at me with upturned eyes.

I unexpectedly felt shocked at the cuteness which was different from usual.

We gave up on the underwear that disappeared into the sea and headed for the lodging house in the end.

Although Julie was usually defenseless, it looks like she is quite embarrassed since she was not wearing anything now, and was following behind while pushing her skirt at all times.

We reached a cove at the beach which was surrounded by 10 meter tall cliffs.

But it's not like it stayed that way for a long time. We continued walking a bit farther and discovered a somewhat gentle rock surface.

"Looks like it is easy to climb from here……but before that, Lilith please sit there for a while."

Lilith did what I told her and sat on a small rock; I then bent down in front of her.

After that, I tore my uniform and covered her feet with it.

"This is better than being barefooted."

"Fufu, thank you, Tooru. That consideration itself makes me happy. Thanks to that, I really want to make you my <<Duo>>-----"

"Tooru, let's go if we have already finished preparing."

Julie slipped in as if to interrupt Lilith's words. Of course, it was done deliberately.

Lilith shrugged her shoulders while getting up and took the front before heading out.

However, when she started climbing up with her swimsuit on, I had trouble on where to put my sights.

When I lift my face, Lilith's butt would definitely enter my view .

What's more, since people would take many unthinkable poses as far as rock climbing was concerned, I could only think awkward thoughts while climbing up.

Of course, I tried not to look up as much as possible.

……Because of that, I almost fell many times.

There was a circular ridge when we finished climbing the cliffs.

It was at this moment that we first found out this island was a caldera. [3C 2]

It was hollow within the cliffs we climbed from and a forest covered completely with trees spread throughout.

The building we can see in the middle was probably our lodging spot. I could see a wide space like a hall and its surroundings.

“It'll take about an hour I guess?”

“It's questionable whether we could reach it or not before the sun goes down."

The gold girl pointed at the falling sun and agreed with my measurement.

This time, the silver girl opened her mouth.

“The wind is blowing hard here, so I want to get down fast, but ……”

The silver girl was pushing down her skirt desperately, in opposition to the wind blowing through the mountain ridge.

Although I felt sorry at that appearance, I spurted out.

“You are evil, Tooru…….”

“Lilith. Be careful of the branches on the ground.”

She turned around and talked to me.

“Thank you, Tooru. It is okay.”

The light shining in the complex forest got dimmer when it turned into the evening and the times we got stuck in the tree roots got more frequent if we did not pay attention. This was especially true for Lilith, who looked like she was having a hard time walking since she only had cloth covering her feet.

I tried asking her if she wanted a piggy back once but she refused, saying that this was what she gets for joining up with us with only a swimsuit on.

(Lilith is someone that basically does not ask help from anyone else.)

She could do almost everything-------more specifically, I have not seen anything that Lilith could not accomplish at this current point. Accompanied from the education of her parentage, she was the embodiment of accomplished literacy and martial arts.

Nonetheless, it was different now. She could not perform a normal task such as walking.

(All of us are in a pinch so, I think it's alright to count on each other at times like this though…….)

When I looked back again while thinking that, I could see Julie having a hard time with a different problem compared to the gold girl. Whenever there was a big obstacle we had to cross over, she would be concerned with my sights and at the same time------her

skirt, making it hard for her to walk. I am trying my best not to look behind in consideration but, it couldn't be helped since we had to drop our movement speed.

And because of that, the 1 hour I guessed at at the ridge got passed a long time ago and the sun had already set.

"Time of disaster huh……."

That name was suitable for this time period; the darkness inside the forest got even darker and it was really eerie here.

Of course, the darkness is not giving us anything beneficial------

"Ouch……..!!"

There was an anguished voice coming from behind------she probably stepped on a branch or stone.

"Sorry, Lilith. I missed that."

"It can't be helped since it's this dark. It is not your fault, Tooru."

"Even so, sorry. If there is something that can brighten-------"

I suddenly remembered the existence of an object when I said that half-way.

Kachiri. Light shone out when I pressed the armband's switch.

"Uou, it's brighter than I thought."

I did not expect much since it was a small light but, the light was as strong as the ones from torch lights.

"Fufu, that is helpful……..so, since you have forgotten about this, I think it's okay to say that Tooru was at fault for the previous matter just like I thought?"

"Sorry……"

I clapped my hands together and apologized to Lilith who was raising the side of her mouth mischievously.

After 5 minutes since I started moving with the light guiding our footsteps, I could see light from far away.

I made a sigh, when I saw the artificial light coming out of the building.

"Ya-re ya-re, we finally arrived."

I told the girls that we are close and advanced while pointing the light forward.

Just like bugs attracted to flames------- ***this was probably what they are seeing.***

"----, Tooru!!"

"Uwah!?"

Lilith who was walking behind me, suddenly pulled my collar strongly.

I did not have the leisure to ask why.

That was because, something scratched the tip of my nose immediately.

Ka! Something pierced into the tree trunk.

"This is…..!?"

"The next one is coming!!"

I was wondering if it was a double-bladed knife, but when Lilith's voice suddenly jumped to the side, I could once again hear something piercing into the tree trunk. She rolled on the ground using the momentum from her jump and hid behind the trees to avoid the attack which had been continuously targeting her while she was rolling on the ground.

(I see. The light is the target……!!)

I noticed the reason why the aim was so precise and shouted towards my female partner.

"Julie, turn off the light!! It will be targeted!!"

"-----! Ja,Ja----!!"

A light coming from a further distance disappeared, after she shouted while turning it off.

At least she won't get sniped with this.

---That thought was overly hasty.

Something accurately aimed at us as if they could see through the darkness.

Even though I used the trees and stared in the direction that the knife flew from, I could only see the dim forest continuously spreading out and could not see the enemy attacking us.

(An enemy…..!? On a deserted island like this……!?)

Although I was thinking that was impossible, we were currently being attacked.

I acknowledged the facts and switched my awareness to think of the enemy's identity.

Is it an assassin sent into the academy like Tsukimi?

Or maybe it's those battle suit guys that we fought 2 months ago?

Or is it a totally different enemy?

My thoughts stopped when the sound of metal clashing echoed.

(Oh no! Julie and Lilith got targeted!)

Even though I looked towards the direction where the echo of the sword clashing was coming from, I could not see any moving shadows.

It seemed we were separated more than I thought.

(Damn it, I have to go to those two fast……!!)

Julie and Lilith were not in their best conditions and I am the only one who could fight at full strength.

However, I stopped my legs when I was about to run towards the corner where the sound echoed from.

---No, I had no choice but to stop.

That's because a shadow was standing there blocking my path.

It was covered with black clothes and the face was hidden with a hood; that unidentifiable appearance made me think of a demon living in the darkness.

"I met the demon during the time of disaster huh."

I made an ironic smile towards the shadow.

---But, that smile turned into bewilderment in an instant.

The moment the <<Flames>> danced around those black clothes.

And the moment those <<Flames>> took shape and ***transformed into a weapon.***

"A <<Blaze>>…….!?"

Part 2

There was a surprise attack in the darkness. On top of that, the identity of the enemy had not been confirmed even though some time had past since the battle started-----

Normally, she would be maximizing her cautiousness and concentration.

Yes, normally.

However, Julie's concentration had remained in disarray even after the moment the attack came.

The first attack was aimed at Tooru. Julie was also targeted immediately after Lilith shouted, and this event occurred right after she jumped away. The moment she landed her skirt flipped up.

"------!!"

She pushed down her skirt in a panic and looked towards her <<Duo>>-----Tooru.

The boy was making a stern expression towards the darkness----the direction the attack had come from----and was not concerned about Julie.

(It is safe, right…….?)

It was only for an instant and what's more the surroundings were dark------but since the lights were still on, she could not determine whether he saw her or not.

But she had no time to indirectly confirm this with Tooru.

"Julie, turn off the light!! It will be targeted!!"

"----! Ja,Ja---!!"

Although she quickly turned off the light, she still received attacks since her position had been completely exposed to the attacker a few moments ago.

Julie pushed her skirt down while jumping away.

"What are you doing. Hurry up and manifest your <<Blaze>>!"

With a low tone voice, an order came from Lilith.

"…….I know."

Normally, she would be moving her attention to the matter at hand, but that was just how much the girl was in disarray.

(I have to concentrate…….!)

She was surrounded by the silence of the dark forest when she stopped moving.

The wind would sometimes shake the trees and the *Zazaza*, the sound of leaves brushing each other……..was produced------

The attacker aimed for that single moment to launch the attack.

Gikiin!! *Giin*!! She used the <<Saber>> she manifested and deflected the flying object.

"<<Kunai>> huh. So our enemy is a ninja?"

Even though Lilith saw the object that got knocked down and made that comment, her voice currently was not reaching Julie.

Julie's skirt would sway each time and she would knock it down, deflect and dodge; her concentration crumbled each time she did that.

(Where is Tooru…..!?)

She would look around the surroundings for Tooru, especially right after she made a big dodge.

She would be relieved that he could not be seen around but still felt uneasy at the same time.

Julie knew Tooru as someone who would still run to his comrades, no matter how injured he was, to prevent them from getting hurt. Since she couldn't see him now, it would probably mean that something had happened to prevent him from running over.

If that was the case, then Julie thought that she had to defeat the enemy as fast as possible and run over to him herself but-----

"Kuuh……!!"

The enemy did not allow that and continued attacking from a distance. Since the attacks were mostly flying objects, Julie could only remain defensive because she could not close the gap.

Of course, the situation would change if she could close the gap, but she was hesitant in attacking when she thought of the possibility that ***she might be seen.***

(What should I do…….)

Even though the reason was because of her own mistake, Julie hated the enemy for attacking in this situation.

(But Tooru might be in a big trouble, so now is not the time to be hesitating like this……!!)

On the other side, Lilith was analyzing the enemy calmly.

(Quite fast……but, not as fast as Julie.)

Lilith gave the silver girl a high score in that particular point of her battle technique.

Especially the way she moves her body; she had already experienced that first hand during the previous <<Survive>>. At that time Julie was impatient and she was able to deal with the straight forward and simple attacks without any difficulty. However, if she had attacked in a calmer manner then, the battle would probably have been more complicated.

Of course, Lilith thought that her victory still would not have changed.

Anyhow, there was a great difference with the movements of the girl holding the <<Double>> standing beside her and the enemy attacking them right now.

(……The problem would be that the enemy's movements are not straight.)

The enemy changes the course path suddenly by kicking off of the abundant trees. The enemy would move in the opposite, upward and diagonal directions on the terrain; adding on, the biggest problem would be that the enemy uses the darkness to its maximum advantage, making it hard to confirm the precise location.

The gold girl could do something if she closed the gap, but she could not move because of a reason different than Julie's. She

probably thought that it was going to be hard to corner the opponent because she only had a cloth covering her bare feet, making her unable to bring out her optimal performance.

That was why she decided to concentrate. She would concentrate and prepare her <<Gun[Rifle]>> after predicting the enemy's movements.

"……There!! ----Kuh!?"

Ga. The long barrel backfired and the bullet shot to who knows where because the tip slammed on the surrounding trees.

(The reason why the attack was done here was to use the trees as a cage huh……not bad!)

Lilith made a fearless smile toward the enemy's fighting style.

The <<Kunai>> pierced through the darkness towards that smile but------

Gikiin!! Julie used her blade and slammed it down before standing in front of Lilith as if she was protecting her.

"……..I never asked for your help."

"Ja---. I just did it on a whim."

Lilith did not say any more to that un-honest reply and returned her consciousness to the enemy.

(Not bad at all.)

Whether it's the place selected for the surprise attack, or the timing, and more importantly-----the ability to match up with those who are << III (Level 3) >>, even though she could not display her real abilities------Lilith was giving a good showing.

"Well then……..What should we do huh. It would be nice if there were more space at least……..."

"…….So it will be okay if there is more space, right?"

The silver girl dropped her sights and confirmed the feeling of her surroundings towards Lilith's mumble and asked.

"You got a plan?"

"If you soar to the heavens (jump) in an instant-----***I will make it for you***"

Lilith opened her eyes wide for an instant but immediately understood Julie's intentions.

"So, let's do it in the next timing."

"Ja---"

After Julie nodded, she looked at her feet again.

They were currently surrounded by thickets just reaching to their knees. Tooru was not nearby. It seemed the enemy was feeling superior right now and would probably avoid coming closer.

(It will be okay with this…….!!)

Soon-----that time came. The moment the <<Kunai>> was thrown towards the girls, the girl with blonde hair (Yellow Topaz) jumped straight up and the girl with Silver hair (Silver Blonde) sank her body in the opposite direction.

Julie spun her body while sinking-----and at the same time, used her blades to cut in a circle.

kiin…….!!The attacker certainly heard a high-pitched sound . It was not the clashing echoing metallic sound of the <<Kunai>> getting deflected and knocked down like what had been happening until now.

Then what was that, the answer appeared right in front the moment the attacker had that question.

Mekimekimekimeki…….!! The cage trapping the silver and gold girl was-----

The trees collapsed in a radial manner.

---No, the silver girl had cut them all down.

"Wha…….!?"

The enemy could only be shocked at the girl who changed the scenery with a power unfitting her small body in one move----and because of that, a small chance was born.

The gold girl did not miss that chance and------

A gunshot echoed immediately right after.

Chapter 3 『I Like You Too

Part 1

The black cloth demon kicked the ground just as I was recovering from the discomposure I got from seeing the <<Blaze>>.

"Kuh……..!!"

It did not give me any time, and the 10 meter gap between us got closed------

The black cloth swung down it's <<Blaze>>.

My tank top got sliced even though I jumped away.

The black cloth did not stop there and stepped in even more.

"Kuh!------<<Blaze>>!!"

I blocked the non-stop 2nd and 3rd attacks with my manifested <<Shield>>.

It was a heavy and fast attack.

The power and swiftness was same as me----during the time I was a level <<II>>.

It would be a tough opponent if it was me before the Sublimation to <<III>>, but my physical abilities had become

really high just because I climbed one <<Level>>. It was so high that it was practically impossible to lose to an opponent who was at that same level as before. It also made me think, constant hard work was meaningless.

However, I was on the defensive now.

I was forced to be on the defensive because of the turmoil in my heart.

(Why does this fellow have a <<Blaze>>……!)

The weapon I blocked was a curved one-sided blade----it is most likely a <<Sword>>.

Gyaariri……!! The enemy pushed me. When I pushed back to prevent being pushed over, the black cloth easily jumped back without making any firm contact with the ground.

I asked when we faced each other again after it assumed a 5 meter distance.

"Who are you?"

"……..."

There was no reply. However, it's not like I had no idea who it was.

The enemy was unmistakably an <<Exceed>> since it has a <<Blaze>>.

If that is the case then the black cloth is probably Tsukimi's old comrade or something close to that.

The thought that a betrayer who had been hired by an organization or country that did not like the existence of the <<Exceed>> had infiltrated the staff popped up in my mind.

Different from that, there is one more point I was concerned about.

(This <<Blaze>>. Where have I-----)

"-------!!"

The black cloth kicked the ground as if to interrupt my thoughts . It then closed the gap without caring about the complex landscape in this dark forest.

Different from just now, it lowered its body posture and attempted to make a tackle this time. The moment I reached its <<Sword>> range, the blade came attacking to my lower leg from the left.

The black cloth took one more step and slashed back the same time I took a small jump back. It was a 2 stage attack meant to make me jump mid-air-----but, I had predicted that much already.

Gainnnn!! I twisted my body while blocking the blade as if I was hitting my <<Shield>> at it.

It seems the impact was unexpected to the black cloth and it stumbled a little before it was my turn to attack.

I did not deal any damage even though my hook scratched the enemy. But, the fist has a greater advantage than the sword now that I had entered the chest area.

Even though it blocked two of my punches with the grip when I punched in rapid succession, the 3rd hit landed on its shoulder and it staggered from it.

"Now!! ------Kuh!?"

I stopped my movements when it kicked me as I was about to make a follow up.

Although the black cloth was staggering, it entered the tree shadows and hid itself.

(Damn it, there goes my chance!!)

The moment I thought it hid behind the tree shadows, I could hear the ground getting kicked and----

The black cloth's presence disappeared into the darkness.

Zaa……!! Some of the trees in my surroundings moved unnaturally and made rustling sounds.

"--------!!"

I could sense its presence behind me suddenly. When I looked back, the black cloth swinging its <<Sword>> down was there.

Jigiin!! I immediately prepared my <<Shield>> and blocked it. More specifically, my <<Shield>> entered the blade's path by luck.

(Kuh…….so this is your real battle style huh!!)

The speed and strength did not change. The movement was the thing that changed.

The bewitching jump kicks performed on the tree trunks, branches and of course the ground looked like what Tsukimi used when I fought her last time.

That time it was a 4 cornered classroom, but it was different now. The trees lined up unnaturally were of course not acting as a single body and had become a screen covering my view. The moment I thought it moved left, it kicked the branches and headed upward before kicking the branches again and heading immediately downward. It then jumped to the right and hid behind the trunks, causing me to lose sight of it------before suddenly jumping out from the thicket behind me.

Giin!! I somehow managed to block it and was about to counter attack immediately but the enemy had already disappeared from that spot.

It jumped back while the blade was swung down, then leaped its body back into the darkness again.

(It's completely going with a hit and run pattern. What an annoying opponent!!)

What's more it was completely avoiding entering my fist range.

That hit and run fight style was enough to fill in the gap between our physical abilities.

(But, I don't have the time to play with you…….!!)

I have to go to those 2 girls.

I fixed my rough breathing while clearing out my ears to concentrate on reading the enemy's presence.

(Alright, come…..!)

Where will the black cloth come from? Right, left, from behind again, or maybe-------

Zaaaaa…….!! The sound was close. It was not from the right , left or behind.

"Above!!"

*Baki**baki* the sounds of thin branches was produced and the black cloth attacked from above.

The daijoudan[3d 1] slash with the weight of falling down added into it, probably has very high power in it.

My body would probably get blown away even if I blocked it with my <<Shield>>.

That was why-----I dodged the blade's path.

I dodged it with the body movements I learned from Tachibana that I had continuously practiced in the 2 months after the << Survive>> until today, and at the same time I slipped into its chest area after I spun my body.

"------!!"

In the moment of the black cloth's surprise, I was already grabbing hold of the hand holding on to the <<Sword>>----and threw the black cloth down. The air inside the lungs of the black cloth came out at the same time as the impact. I did not stop the flow there and mounted it by taking the advantage of the throw's momentum.

"This…….is the end!!"

I pushed the black cloth's chest down and swung down my fist----that was supposed to happen but.

"Eh……..?"

I stopped my fist.

Because the hood hiding the black cloth's face came off when I threw it down.

Because I saw the face under the hood.

Because that face----belonged to someone I was familiar with.

"Y-yo-yo-you are……."

I could not hide my shock when I saw the girl with long ponytail.

She was------

"Imari!?"

She was the opponent I fought with during the Kouryou academy enrollment exam. She looked a little more mature compared to last time. As usual Nagakura Imari------was exactly a lively girl with both cuteness and beauty.

"Ah……"

Pokan She made a blank expression at my shout------before making an unconcerned laugh.

"Ahaha, I got found out."

"E-err……?"

"We might have met up again in a weird way but-----long time no see, Tooru."

"A-aah……Long time no see……"

Because it was a sudden event, I greeted back while maintaining my astonishment.

"Aah, I lose this time too huh. You are strong as I expected."

"I-iyaa……Imari got a lot stronger too."

"Fufu, I am happy you said that."

After she nodded in satisfaction at my comment----

Imari's expression turned a little awkward.

"……By the way Tooru. Can you let go already?"

"Let go……..?"

Imari moved her sights to show me the reason when she heard my words.

After I followed it, my hand was still pushing her body down.

I was holding tightly onto------her soft breast which could be called the symbol of a woman.

"Tooru……you pervert."

Imari stood up before erasing her <<Sword>>.

(No wonder I thought I had seen it before……..)

Although I was thinking why I did not recall back just now, I think the biggest reason why I could not recall back was because I heard that the losers from the <<Qualification ceremony>> had their <<Lucifer>> removed and lost their qualification to become an <<Exceed>>.

"I completely have no idea what is going on. Can you give me an explanation?"

"Of course. But before that-----"

"If it is our side then, we are done."

The gold girl showed herself from the darkness.

Beside her, there was a girl with Silver Blonde hair opposite to her hair color.

"Looks like your side ended too, Tooru."

"A-ahh……Err, what is that?"

Julie was carrying some kind of black person.

"She is the one that attacked first."

"That's my <<Duo>>"

As if to add on to Julie's words, Imari gave an explanation.

"<<Duo>>……..no seriously what is going on……."

I replaced Julie in carrying the black cloth and started walking towards the lighted building.

The talk Imari started while we were walking was quite surprising.

"Br-branch school!?"

"Yes, Kouryou academy branch school. That is the school I am affiliated with right now. Incidentally, the building you all are heading to is our lodging place and at the same time the branch school's school building."

It was a continuous streak of surprises even though she said that.

3 months ago-------the <<Qualification ceremony>> ended and after the losers left the auditorium, they were brought to the building grounds and were pressed with a choice.

Although there might be some rules, they would either transfer to a normal high school or----maybe transfer to the Kouryou academy branch school to become an <<Exceed>> again but, the environment would be harsh.

It seems Imari picked the path of the branch school without a second thought and brought herself to this island.

During the following 3 months, she received severe training and after she sublimated to <<II>> by the <<Sublimation ceremony>> last semester, she was told that the students from the main school--------meaning us, were coming to visit the island for a seaside school.

Also, they would be conducting a <<Blaze Practice>> of hiding their identity and attacking us.

"So that was what happened…….I don't know what to say but anyway this is great. It's really great that Imari's path did not get cut off……."

"Fufu, looks like I made you really worried at that time. Thanks, Tooru."

I kept thinking it was my fault that I cut off her path last time but I felt a load of my chest the moment I heard that it really wasn't the case.

"However, I told you this before but you really became stronger. If our <<Level>> was the same then, I don't think I could win."

"Ahaha, it became a good fight because the terrain advantage was totally mine. Also, my eyes got used to the darkness thanks to the time spent on this island. That's why the conditions can be said to be fair------uuun, rather I think I was at the advantage……..nonetheless, judging by the fact that I could not even stand a chance against you last time, I am honestly happy that you told me that I got stronger."

That smile was the same as the time I first met her.

Different from the ending of the <<Qualification ceremony>>, I relaxed my cheeks from the happiness coming from my heart.

"By the way, Tooru. Can you introduce those two to me? I saw that girl in the entrance ceremony but, I don't know her name."

"Hnn? Aah, that's right. She is called Julie and is my <<Duo>>"

"Ja---. Julie=Sigtuna. I am Tooru's <<Duo>>. Nice to meet you."

"Nice to meet you Julie. I am Nagakura Imari."

Julie and Imari exchanged a handshake and---------

"<<Duo>>!?"

She was surprised after some time lag.

"Wait, errr, she is a girl and, Ueee!? Ah……do-don't tell me the main school is different to the branch school, and the rooms are different, like that……?"

"Same room."

"To-Tooru…….you didn't do anything behind the scenes, right…….?"

"I didn't!"

That reaction was quite nostalgic since our classmates had gotten used to the fact that me and Julie were living in the same room and had stopped teasing us…….of course, I still had to retort back with a loud voice though.

"Is that so……..I can only feel it is amazing, in a certain way though……."

I don't feel like I was being praised, but she was most likely praising me.

"Err, then about the other girl……"

"I am Lilith=Bristol. Tooru's fiancee."

"Self-proclaimed though."

After exchanging a handshake with Lilith, Imari------

"Fiancee!?"

"Like I said, self-proclaimed."

It was already a retort since this was the 2nd time.

"Self-proclaimed huh, how cold of you. Aren't we in a relationship since we kissed?"

"Ki…….!?"

Her eyes opened wide and Imari looked shocked.

"That was something you did one-sidedly ignoring Tooru's will . What's more, it was on the cheek."

"Then, I will get Tooru's permission. Tooru kiss me. Of course the lips are okay too."

"I'm not going to……..."

The gold girl placed her finger at her lips. Julie was standing there as if she was protecting me from Lilith.

The ponytail said this while looking at the both of them.

"……Looks like you are having a fun life, Tooru."

"How can you get that idea after looking at this situation……"

I changed the topic of conversation after making a sigh towards Imari, who stared at me with eyes carrying a hidden meaning.

"But, now that I think about it again, it really is a coincidence huh? Even if you all were told to attack us, to think that I would be fighting against Imari again."

Even though it was decided for the branch students to attack the main students in the forest, I would never have thought I would meet up with Imari from the <<Qualification ceremony>> again.

---I brought the conversation there when I thought of it and I got an unexpected reply back.

"Aah, there was a little trick to that. You received an armband when you got off the boat right? Actually, there is a transmitter attached to it, and that is why we were able to identify each individual."

She then took out a smartphone-looking portable terminal from her pocket and showed it to me. It seems the map shown on the screen belonged to this island. There was a circle shown on the map. There were numbers written inside the circle and the number followed the main school group's record number.

"So, you are saying that the branch school had complete knowledge of our movements?"

"That's about it……..so, I wanted to show Tooru the results I gained during these 3 months and requested everyone to give me the priority to challenge you……well, thanks to Tooru coming up at a different spot compared to the others, it was easy to make a situation to fight you 1 vs 1."

Thanks to that Imari made Miwa------the opponent Julie and Lilith fought-----take on a tough role and made a wry smile.

"But, why did you end up at the eastern side?"

"That's because Julie can't swim. We drifted away from the others when I went to save her."

"Hee, Julie can't huh…….that's somehow kind of unexpected. "

It probably was very unexpected to her because she saw Julie fight during the enrollment ceremony.

"------?"

Julie and Imari's eyes met and Julie *Chirin* tilted her small head producing a bell ring.

"Now that I think about it, Tooru. I remembered this when the armband topic got brought up, but why didn't you send out a rescue signal when we were fighting just now?"

"……Now that you mentioned it, there is that function huh?"

"You were attacked by an unidentified enemy, so you have to send the signal out because it includes the meaning of emergency contact too. If we really were enemies targeting the lives of Tooru and the main school students what were you going to do? Lives could be saved just by contacting help."

"Uu, how strict."

"Use everything you have in your hand. ……..our instructor slammed that completely into our heads."

I made an 'understood' nod towards Imari who brought out her tongue playfully.

"Okay, then. We're here."

Further up the forest Imari was pointing to, the building was producing outside light.

The western style building looks unfitting for a building in the southern seas, and it was giving out a somewhat similar atmosphere as the dormitory we passed our days in.

Imari ran to the front of the building and turned around.

"Welcome, to Kouryou academy branch school!"

When we entered the western style building, Lilith left telling me she wanted to change and disappeared inside with Sara who came to pick her up.

Even though there was lighting here, Julie and I were being led through the dim wooden corridor by Imari.

*Gishi**gishi* sounds like this were produced and it seems the room we were being brought to was the cafeteria.

When we peeked inside, we saw our classmates from the main school already here.

"Looks like not everyone is here yet."

"Uun, you all are the last ones. The reason why the numbers aren't right is because there might be some that are unconscious after getting beaten by the branch school group. They should be sleeping in a different room until they wake up."

I thought back when she told me that. We took a rest before moving from the beach.

It was only normal for everyone else that got to shore in another spot to reach here a long time ago.

"Okay then, we the branch school group have things to prepare so we are going now. See you later, Tooru, Julie."

While wondering what kind of preparation it was, Imari said her goodbye and stepped into the cafeteria.

"Julie. Be careful."

"Ja, Ja---……."

Our luggage got transported to the cafeteria during the day.

We headed to our luggage located in the corner of the room as fast as possible and got Julie's underwear.

During that time, I was taking up positions where the surrounding people would be unable to see Julie.

(I never would have thought to test out the things we learn in class like this……..)

This was something that I didn't realize might be useful somewhere in this world.

……..There should be a limit to how rare this example is.

Julie then headed outside to put on her underwear while in the toilet.

I then fell flat on the table before Tora talked to me.

"Fuun, you sure took your time."

Tora was smirking and the first words that came out from his mouth was [I got here first so it's my win].

……It's somehow frustrating.

[Kokonoe. Looks like you got here safe][Go-good work, Tooru-kun…….]

Tachibana and Miyabi joined in at that moment.

"Where did Julie-chan go……?"

"She told me she was headed to the toilet."

That was not a lie.

"By the way, you guys being in this room would mean that you guys fought off the branch school group too?"

"That's because To-Tomoe-chan protected me."

"Fufu, it's not only me. If it weren't for Tora, who knows what could have happened."

From what I heard from Tachibana, they acted in a group with 6 people by Tora's suggestion and arrived to the branch school without leaving anyone behind.

"As expected-------is what I wanted to say but, it's okay to say that I misheard that Tora suggested to act as a group?"

"It's true."

Tachibana became the witness and Miyabi *un**un* nodded.

"…….Tora, did you catch a fever after getting your body cold in the sea?"

"Hell no!! I suggested it because it would get annoying if the slow one got hurt and told you that I was around her when that happened."

"Uu……..Sorry for being slow….but, thank you, Tora-kun……."

"I-I don't need your thanks anyway!!"

Tora turned away maybe from embarrassment.

"But well, it's just as Tora says. I would most likely be concerned if someone got hurt. So-----Thanks."

"------! Fu-funn, thank me as much as you like…….!"

Why is your attitude clearly only different to me.

"Tooru, I am back."

Julie came back at that moment.

With the familiar faces gathered, they chatted around like usual ------

Soon the other classmates who had been resting in another room started popping up.

And just when everyone gathered, Mikuni-sensei followed the chairman into the room.

“Good work all of you for today. Mikuni has something to say about the stay here now, but before that, there is an apology I must make to everyone here.”

The Chairman’s apology-----was about lying to us about the << Qualification Ceremony>>.

“When a time where you have to fight to open your path comes, you must have a strong will to confront it------in order to accomplish that, I made a lie saying that I wouldn't allow your enrollment unless you did so, and I hereby apologize about it.”

After the chairman took a deep bow, the room turned somewhat noisy.

The rumor that we were guinea pigs for her to test her experiments had been heard by the students in Kouryou academy at least once.

We might not know the truth but we cannot just assume that rumor to be false.

There is a <<Lucifer>> research institute under the academy, and it is a well-known fact to the students that the chairman is the one in charge of it.

A person with that status accepting responsibility for her actions and lowering her head changed the impression I had for her up until now, and I probably was not the only one here that thought that.

It made me think that she was someone with a strong enough will for her to be prepared to be hated; when I was told that the cold-blooded woman that has a teaching policy which could only be described as irrational was actually thinking about the students.

When the chairman's talk-----apology ended, Mikuni-sensei started talking about the schedule for this next week.

The content was not really new and could be said to be close to the same as usual.

We are to live on this island for one week, we will be participating in training which can't be executed in the main school with the branch school students, we are not to take off the armbands since the training is somewhat dangerous, we will be free on the last day, etc, etc……..

"It will be dinner time next, but the people in branch school have already prepared food for you today. Each individual, please move to the hall."

After hearing the word dinner, a few students (including me) gulped and stood up making noise the same time the talk ended.

"Seriously, your eyes shine when it comes to food, you are one heck of a guy……"

While Tachibana was making a wry smile, she continued her words.

"However…….isn't it great, Kokonoe?"

"About what?"

"I am talking about the ponytail girl. It might be an unthinkable re-encounter but, aren't you relieved that she is working hard here ?"

"Aah, it's about Imari huh. That's true, it really is great."

3 months ago, I closed off Imari's path with my own hands. We both agreed with the results, but it was a fact that the guilt became thorns piercing into me.

That was why I felt happy knowing that she was working hard in this branch school like this.

"……Ah, that's right. Speaking about the Imari event, this might be a little too late but, thank you for trying to cheer me up right after the enrollment. I was really happy thanks to Tachibana' s feelings."

"Tha-that's an old talk."

Tachibana's cheek, which was turned away, was blushing just a little.

When we headed outside, a heat wave different than the ones from the summer night blew past us. There were several barbecue grills set up and the branch school students were there.

A representative from the branch school came closer to us when they saw us coming out of the western-style building.

"Welcome to Kouryou academy branch school!! A lot happened in the enrollment ceremony and in <<Blaze practice>> today, but just wash those things down with water or with the meat that you are going to swallow. So, nice to meet you all and pleasure working with all of you for this one week!!"

It seemed Imari was the branch school's representative.

Nonetheless, it was something agreeable if I thought about her sociable personality. *Un**un* one person nodded before a familiar rabbit-eared person voiced out while hanging a skewer with a piece of grilled meat pierced onto it.

"So with that said, we will be having barbecue for dinner while deepening our relationships, everyone♪"

"Hey, Tsukimi-sensei right? Why are you already grilling the meat when we have not toasted yet!?"

"Don't worry about it, Tail-chan"

The main school students made wry smiles when they saw the pace Tsukimi displayed and the panicking Imari; there were some that got tired (Mainly the people around me), and during that time , the paper plates, chopsticks, and paper cups were distributed to everyone.

[How about cola? There is orange juice too] [I want cola]

[I will have oolong] [I-is there milk……..?]

Such conversations were exchanged between the main and branch school for a while-----

And not long after, everyone had their cups filled with drink.

Incidentally during this time, most of the main school students including me were getting restless because of the aroma of meat that was floating around from what Tsukimi was grilling.

"Okay then----Cheers!"

""""Cheers!!""""

After taking a gulp, the hall was filled with noise.

[Don't push. There is a lot of meat and vegetables] [Hey you! That meat is not cooked yet!] [Shuddap, I like it rare!!] [Onion is something to look forward to♪]

It's not the level of a little commotion. Hungry teenagers------ what's more because we were made to swim with our clothes on during the day, and fight with the branch school students in a << Blaze practice>>, our hunger had reached its peak. Thanks to that, everyone got desperate for the food until it made it hard to get the grilled up meat and vegetables.

"Julie, are you going to eat only vegetables?"

When I headed beside her after getting meat, meat and only meat, I saw the plate Julie was holding only had vegetables on it.

"Nai. I wanted to take some meat but, it disappeared in no time at all……."

"Ah---……..well, it is a grilled meat contest now."

It would be quite a fierce battle if it was during the start.

"……If you are okay with mine, do you want some of mine?"

"Is it okay?"

"Aah, it's all meat like you see so it isn't a problem if I share some. As payment, please keep this a secret from Tachibana."

I took a peek at Tachibana who was talking with a branch school student far away.

Just like me and Imari, it seemed it was her opponent from her <<Qualification ceremony>> battle, and Tachibana was talking to her.

"Ja---. I understand, I will take this and this."

Julie made a faint smile and *Chirin* the bell rang when she nodded.

I then took a big sausage and one diced steak and transferred it to her plate.

The silver girl took a bite of the sausage with her small mouth and *Byuu* the meat juices came spurting out.

"Hnn……it's hot……."

"Are you okay? Be careful not to get burnt okay?"

"Ja----, I will be careful. *Lick*…….*chu**Hnkun*……..it is delicious……."

Julie scooped up the juice on her cheeks with her finger and licked it.

She then *Fuu**fuu* blew the hot sausage again while putting it into her mouth.

Maybe because it was hot, but she was eating the meat stick while her cheeks were blushing.

"Ahmu…….Hnn……..Tooru's sausage is hot and delicious……..*Hamu*, *Chuu*……."

"A-ahh……."

Even though I was just looking at her eating the sausage, my heart was *doki**doki* pumping hard for some reason.

It somehow feels that I made her do something which should not have been done or how should I say…….

"Hnkuhnn, Tooru's is so big…….Hamu, Hnn, fuu……."

It might have been a fierce fight but I took a big one properly. As expected of me.

However, it seems that it might have been a little too big for Julie's small mouth.

"Tooru, Julie, are you eating?"

[Yup. A whole bunch] [Ja---]

Imari came with a paper plate filled with a mountain of meat, while I was eating and talking to Julie.

"I see. Then that's good. There is still more so eat until you are full…….wait, that's a lot of meat."

"It's called, do something while the demon is not around."

Of course, Tachibana was at the end of my sights when I took a peek.

"I don't get it but, looks like Tooru is a meat lover huh. Fufu, I am too."

I noticed this when she said it but, there was a huge amount of meat on Imari's plate.

[My comrade!!] [Comrade!!]

GaShii we lifted our shoulders high up and grabbed our hands together.

"What are you two doing……..."

Tora came over and made a big sigh when he saw us doing that.

"……..Ah-re, you are Tooru's friend, if I am right you're-------"

"I was planning to say you have good memory but, I am not his friend."

Imari made a [Am I wrong] expression for a moment. However, it seems she recalled back the conversation she had during the enrollment ceremony. After she made a smile and introduced herself, Tora introduced himself back.

She then talked with Tora for a while.

Even if the partner was Julie who talks little or Tora who was blunt with almost everyone, Imari would display her sociability and her natural cheerfulness to connect the conversation skillfully.

That short moment even made me think that she had been in the group since last time.

"And, I am out of meat. Time for seconds."

I left those words to those three and headed to one of the several grills set up which had less people surrounding it.

We could grill our own meat, and it was okay to take the meat that was placed on the iron grill by the staff responsible for the grilling, so to me who was a greedy fellow, I decided to pick both ways.

While cooking my own meat, I extended my hand to the skewered meat grilled by the staff and------

My hands piled on top of another person who was aiming for the same meat.

[Ah, sorry] [N-no, it's my fault too----------To-To-Tooru-kun!?]

It was Miyabi.

"Ah……"

Miyabi moved her gaze from my face to her hand which my hand was piling on and-----

“”…….””

It was approximately 3 seconds of silence.

“Pyaa----------!?”

Miyabi raised both her hands together with a shout.

Naturally, we became the center of attention.

“So-sorry. A bug flew here……..right, Miyabi.”

Nodnodnodnodnodnodnodnod

I immediately made an excuse and made Miyabi follow it up. Since the main culprit who shouted said it’s correct, our surroundings returned back to their own conversation immediately.

“So-sorry, for shouting like that…….”

“It’s okay. I'm sorry to scare you too.”

“Uu……..It’s true if you say I got scared though……”

Shunn When I saw Miyabi getting disheartened, I thought it couldn’t be helped since she was bad with the opposite sex.

In my own opinion, we should have gotten closer in the 3 months since we have known each other.

It was enough for me to put my chest up proudly and say that I am her closest friend in terms of the male condition.

But even so, since she shouted it would mean that------

(This might be my imagination but, judging by the fact that she is friends with Julie and Tachibana, she might be forcing herself to act as my friend even though she dislikes it!?)

It would be a shock for me if it was true but, I felt that it was not something impossible.

(But during that time on the ship, Miyabi did ask me to lend her my shoulder…….)

I don't get it anymore.

After I took a peek at Miyabi, she regained her composure and put vegetables and meat on to her own plate with the tongs.

"Hey, Miyabi. There is something I want to ask but……"

"Errr, what is it…….?"

I pondered on how to ask her and just randomly asked her.

"Do you hate me?"

"Uuuh!?"

Miyabi gasped.

Her hands let go of the tongs and it dropped to the ground making a *Gachan* sound.

“Wha-what……..do you mean……..?”

Miyabi opened her eyes wide and asked back.

“Ah…….I guess it was a little too random huh. Oh well, these kind of topics are best asked straightforwardly so, I just wanted to ask if I'm still within the dislike category without any changes?”

“Ah……So-so that is what you meant…….err, that is not true……Really, really……”

The feeling of asking something I shouldn't have felt very strong and I felt a little regret that I had asked her this.

“Al-also……..”

Miyabi faced her back to me and crouched down before picking up the tongs while continuing her words.

“I Li-li-lili-lii-li-like Tooru-kun……as a friend, as a friend……”

She said it twice just in case. But even so, my heart pumped for an instant.

“I see. Thanks, I like you too Miyabi.”

"Pyaa!?"

The tongs got blown away-------if I said that, it felt as if the humid night would turn cold in one go.

"What are you doing, Miyabi?"

"The-there really is a bug this time……Ahaha……..."

She picked up the tongs while making a smile at the disaster and after she did that, I went back to Julie together with Miyabi.

"Tooru, so you are here. Mouu, I have been looking for you."

When I was continuing my meal with the usual faces excluding Tachibana, Lilith who had finished changing her clothes came and joined us. Behind her like usual, Sara was following her (and was glaring at me).

"You sure took your time to change."

"I took a shower while I was at it."

After saying that, Lilith flicked her hair with her hands. The soft-looking blonde hair danced lightly.

Yellow Topaz

Incidentally, a nice smell floated and it tickled my nose.

"Now that I think about it, we did swim in the ocean."

I completely forgot about it since it was hours ago but, my hair felt a little dried up when I tried touching my hair.

"It feels kind of stiff……."

Julie touched her own hair like me and leaked out her comments.

"Isn't it better to take a shower after you finish eating?"

"Ja----, I will do that. Miyabi let's go together."

"Ah…….So-sorry. I took one immediately when I got here so……"

From what I heard, it seems Tora and the others had already taken showers and we were the only ones who had not taken one since we came in late.

"It feels kind of stiff once you get concerned about it."

"Is it that stiff?"

"Want to try touching, Tooru?"

"Aah, that's right."

When I tried touching, it's true that her Silver Blonde hair was stiff and it felt completely different than the comfortable silky hair during the afternoon.

"Tooru. Why not touch my hair too while you are at it."

While saying that, Lilith held a tuft of her hair and showed it to me.

"In this case, I think it is meaningless to touch your hair since you took your shower already-----"

"It's okay just do it. Incidentally, you can take a whiff."

"I-I get it……."

Even though I nodded, I wouldn't smell her hair as expected… ……it somehow feels perverted.

"Okay, I am going to touch it okay?"

"Why are you asking for confirmation for my case."

While making a reply, I touched Lilith's hair.

……I decided to act as if I couldn't see the butler making a demonic face behind Lilith.

"Uwah. It feels really nice."

"Fufu, Thank you♪"

It seems she had been taking care of it regularly and it's soft while elastic making it feel nice to touch.

I then understood why she asked me to touch it when I actually touched it and-----

“How nice…….”

Miyabi mumbled.

“What is it. Do you want to touch as well Miyabi?”

“Eh? Errr, th-that’s, ah-no…….!!”

Miyabi panicked when I talked to her. It’s probably because I picked up the mumble which she thought no one could hear.

“Lilith. Looks like Miyabi wants to touch it too. Can she?”

“Miyabi too? Yes, I don’t mind.”

“That’s great, Miyabi.”

“U-un…….”

Miyabi nodded in a complex mood but, her expression changed to surprise when she touched Lilith’s hair.

(She probably thinks it feels nice even though they are both females. Miyabi’s hair is pretty too so, it looks nice to touch too.)

“……..What were you doing just now, Tooru?”

When I turned around, a girl swinging her ponytail was there.

"We were just asking her to let us touch her hair though?"

"…….I'll ask this first but, is she your girlfriend?"

"Huh? What's up with that?"

"Ah, un. Forget it……."

Imari immediately cut the conversation and what's more it was her that started the question; she then made a tired sigh.

"Tooru. Can I have a moment?"

When I looked to Lilith when I was called, she gave me a plate with meat on it.

"Can I eat it?"

"You still have some on your own plate. I am telling you to feed me."

"Why should I……..eat it by yourself."

"There is no meaning if you don't feed me."

"Okay, open wide."

Julie picked up the meat from the plate and moved it to Lilith's mouth.

"*Chew**chew*…….Hafuhafuu……..Hnn, not bad…… …….wait, who asked you to feed me!?"

"……Both Tooru's hands are occupied."

"Isn't one of his hands holding chopsticks!!"

"……..Nai, don't worry about it. So with that said, open wide once more."

"Hn, Hafuu, Hafuu, *Chew**chew*…….wait, listen to what people have to say!!"

(She is still eating, although she is complaining…….)

Miyabi and Imari burst out laughing at the skit like conversation.

"Okay, then------"

"Ah, Ah-re? Where are you going, Tooru-kun…….?"

Miyabi stopped me when I was about to add more meat since all the meat was gone from my plate.

"It's not like I am full so, I plan to get a little more."

"Fufu, you mean meat?"

"Aah. With Tachibana not here now, now is the only chance to eat meat."

"Fumu. Now is the chance because I am not here huh?"

""……""

The owner of that dignified voice touched my shoulders and I slowly turned back.

That person-----Tachibana like I predicted was staring at me with a smile.

Tachibana is a beauty and I feel that beauty is enough to entrance me if she smiled.

However at that moment, I could only see the smile of a hannya [3d 2].

"Kokonoe, sit there."

"Yes……."

After dinner, Julie and I each took a shower before heading to the cafeteria together.

When we reached there, we received a carry bag from the staff before heading out again.

The hall was completely different from almost an hour ago and there were tents placed here and there.

It had been established that we would be camping during the time we were at the seaside school------of course, together with our <<Duo>>.

Thanks to that, I was warned by Tachibana and Imari to not do anything strange to Julie.

I don't want to infringe on Julie's feeling of thinking as me as her father so, I got their trusts in the meantime.

---Because of that, I had to ignore the various jeers coming from the other guys.

"Tooru, should this area be good enough?"

"Ahh, Let's do that."

We decided to set up the tent at the corner of the hall and after taking the tent out from the bag, we quickly set it up before Julie entered first and I followed her after that.

The tent we were going to stay in for one week was about the size of a double bed wide, and since there was an inner mat spread out under the tent, we could not feel the hardness of the ground. And since there was a mesh window on the ceiling and sides of the tent to prevent accumulating heat, it looked like the ventilation in here was good. And because there was a cover called a flysheet covering our exterior acting as a double wall for us, our privacy was guaranteed.

When I entered the tent, Julie was performing a Seiza inside.

My eyes met with her red eyes (Ruby eyes) and thought this for some reason .

"…….Hey, Julie. Is it my imagination that you look happy? "

*Chirin**Chirin* the bell rang when the silver girl swung her head to the left and right.

My predictions were correct when I saw that posture.

Although there was a lack of change in expressions, it's actually popping out in the atmosphere.

---It might be because the time we have spent together has been long enough that I can understand these things.

However, I still asked her since I am still not at that level where I can perceive what she was happy about.

"Actually, I lied to Imari just now. She asked me how I feel about sleeping with Tooru and I replied to her that I did not mind but-------"

(She said both of them talked about that but, when did that conversation take place?)

However it seems the answer she replied to Imari was a lie and I continued waiting on how that was connected to Julie's good mood.

"I was really interested in it. I feel very happy when I think about being able to sleep together without caring about the promise for one week."

"I-I see……..errrr……good for you?"

"Ja---♪"

Although her expression did not change like usual, I felt that the atmosphere around her got *Baaa* one layer livelier.

(……..I thought about this before but, Julie really does look like some kind of small animal.)

If Julie had a tail, there was no mistake that it would probably be waggling left and right, right now.

And at the same time, I thought it would be very easy for me if she really was a small animal.

When I sleep with Julie, she would cling to me resulting in a soft sensation, a sweet smell, she would also breathe near my neck and I would get nervous on not touching any weird spots so, it was quite a tiring event.

“By the way Tooru. There is something I need to tell you before we sleep. Thank you for today. I will now be careful so I won’t repeat the same mistake.”

She took a deep bow.

“So with that said, I have something I want to request Tooru, although it is embarrassing.”

“Okay. What is it?”

It is most likely a request to teach her how to swim or-------just when I thought that, she handed me something.

“I want Tooru to hold this.”

It was a round cloth ball.

“What is this?”

When I spread open it-----it was a piece of underwear.

“…….”

"Tooru, spreading it is a little……."

(I see I see.)

It's true that this request is embarrassing.

However, she would probably be relaxed if I were to hold onto this, as there would be a change for her if her underwear flies away like today.

But------

"……..Sorry, give me a break."

Since my life would end if things go bad, I gave a clear refusal to her.

Just like that, I had a tiring conversation for a finale and the first day of the seaside school reached its end.

Part 2

"Our preparations here are done."

A veteran soldier-like man with several scars on his face reported to the Caucasian teenager.

"Understood. Please start your mission as scheduled…….. please refrain from doing any actions other than the one given to you until the time comes, in order to avoid having that side read our intentions."

"I understand, sir."

The man that received his orders turned on his heels and exited the room.

He distorted his mouth while making a vulgar smile.

(Ahh, I will be a good boy and perform the mission…….but it will be different when things start.)

In his mind, the face of the boy who made him drink boiling water 2 months ago appeared in his mind.

The storm of resentment and anger raged inside the man's heart .

"Damn brat…..I will definitely beat the shit out of you this time …..!!"

Chapter 4 『I Wanted To Be Together Longer

Part 1

On the sea 180 km southeast of Tokyo, on an island that's blocked from the public------

The 2nd morning of the seaside school came to greet us.

“Fuwah, Ah……”

“Fufu. You look tired, Kokonoe”

“That’s because yesterday was tiring”

I exited the tent without waking Julie up and Tachibana laughed when I headed to the meeting spot while yawning. Unlike me, it seems Tachibana was already completely awake and giving out her usual dignified atmosphere.

I left the hall lined up with the tents to avoid waking everyone else up and headed to the forest path reaching from the branch school to the harbor.

Maybe most of the animals living in the island were still sleeping, but I could occasionally hear the sound of birds chirping; basically it was very quiet. The air in this untouched island smells nice and after I took a good sniff of the clear air into my chest, the morning just like what I go through in the main school started.

“Okay then, let’s begin from the first like usual. Start”

Tachibana urged me and I started the training like normal.

I made a stance first and it was a basic move where I only can move my back feet.

I then moved to the next 8th style basic move and advanced forward while changing my step in leg's axis just like what Tachibana taught me. This technique of sometimes turning around or half around coupled with the technique of turning to the opposite direction was the combination I used to throw Imari when I fought her on the first day.

The last was the middle line--------I started the Tachibana style Himonho technique which consists of me turning around Tachibana without showing most of my body's vital points.

I'll be honest and say that this training is plain, but it's because I know how important the basics are that I concentrate and repeat it. And I found something out because I was concentrating, and that's --------

"Hey Tachibana. Now that I have a good look, your hair is really beautiful"

"Buuu!? What are you saying all of a sudden!?"

"It's not all of a sudden you know. I touched Julie and Lilith's hair last night. Both of them had different hair types but, both of them were beautiful"

"S-so what does that have to relate to my hair"

Maybe she thought I was teasing her because Tachibana voice was angry while her cheeks were slightly blushing.

"Recently, you are the one I have been seeing the most compared to everyone else. And since there was that hair conversation we talked about, my eyes went there for some reason and I just thought it looked pretty"

"More than everyone else!? Bu-but if that's the case then Julie is more than me right!?"

"Tachibana joins me in morning training everyday like this and I had to turn around you the whole time when I am doing the Himonho right. In terms of being together longer, it would probably be Julie. But, it feels as if Julie and my shoulders are lined up and we would see the same thing so…….most of the time we would be looking at the television"

"I-I see, more than Julie too huh……."

The conversation changed from hair to Julie before I knew it. Why is that……..

"Anyway, I just thought Tachibana's hair was beautiful when I saw it. It's not like I was making fun of you, I am really serious about it"

"Eh, ah……Fu-fumu…….err, Tha-thank you……"

While fiddling with her hair by twirling it around with her finger, Tachibana said her thanks.

I relaxed knowing that she understood that I seriously said that and was not teasing her.

"Ah, that's right. Can I touch your hair since we're on this topic ?"

"------!? Eh, uaa…….we-well, I don't mind……"

After receiving Tachibana's permission, I tried touching her long black hair.

Her glossy hair was smooth and it was completely different from Julie and Lilith's hair.

"Hou…….Houhou……."

"Wha-what is with that reaction"

It seems it was ticklish, and Tachibana who was shutting her eyes tightly, opened one of her eyes and asked me in doubt.

"Iyaaa---,I just thought it feels soft and nice. A girl's hair really is soft huh. My hair is just plain hard. Want to try touching?"

"Fu-fumu. Then excuse me------"

After hesitating for a while, Tachibana timidly touched my hair.

"It's hard right?"

"I-I think it's not that hard for mentioning……."

*Touch touch touch

When I asked whether is it okay to go to the next stage with this hasty knowledge------

“It's okay. It’s true that grasping the basics is important and the thing really needed is not to understand the surface techniques but rather to grasp the true nature of it. In order for that, the next most important thing is to gain experience. If you don’t get it then you won’t be able to grasp the nature, right?”

Of course, Tachibana sums it up by telling me continue what I learned before when I have time, before making a smile.

“Okay let’s begin. First, please thrust your hand forward. Next make a circle with the hand you thrust forward-----“

Like this, she started teaching me a new move and I secretly made a relieved sigh since luckily, there was no close body contact this time.

Hard training continued for the rest of the 2nd day of the seaside school.

Not only was there the battle training we usually go through in the main school, but we would also get survival training and rock climbing using the islands terrain with traps set up.

In this tough training we would not escape getting hurt if we didn't concentrate, and since the contents of the training usually came with dangers we went through the every day without relaxing.

4th day-----

A different kind of training started today compared to the other days.

"Haaa……..Haaa……!"

I was dripping in sweat while running deep inside the dark forest even though it was the in the afternoon.

The temperature today was the highest among these past few days and it was quite tough.

(Tsk, this is unexpectedly one thought out training……!!)

The content for the afternoon training was-------a game of tag.

I doubted my ears and thought it was a joke when Tsukimi announced that but, now that the event started I realized the contents of the training was just as hard as the training until now. I

could not continuously run fast since I have to maintain my concentration in this terrain filled with obstacles such as tree roots and rough trunks on the ground.

On top of that, I was made to carry a doll filled with sand for 7 kilometers. Following that context, it seems the concept was to bring the VIP we secured and escape from the spot.

The ones running were the main school group; the catchers are mostly the branch school group. However, it feels like we were getting chased by hunting dogs because the branch school group has lived in this isolated island and has repeatedly done this training.

As long as this is a game of tag, we are bound by the rules of no attacking the catchers, so we had to hide and scatter about. The winning condition was to get to one of the goal points set at several spots in the mountain ridge.

But-----

"Found you, Tooru!"

The catcher was Imari and she appeared in front of me.

"Kuh, you came here before me huh"

"That's right. I got contacted that Tooru was aiming for here"

She displayed the power of the wireless cellphone only limited to the catchers' magnificently.

"Seriously……I am happy in the sense that you keep aiming for me to this extent"

"------uh!? Y-you're wrong! It's not like I purposely came chasing Tooru, it's just that you were nearby me!!"

*Wa**Wa* Imari swung her head and swings her ponytail.

"A-anyway! This is game over for you, Tooru!"

After saying that, Imari kicked the tree trunk.

She glamorously kicked the ground, rocks, trunks and branches; it was the moves she showed on the first day.

Since it would be defeat the moment the catcher touches me, this attacking pattern is the most annoying one.

But-----

"Don't think the same method would work every time, Imari!!"

I grabbed the tree vines and concentrated at the direction Imari was going to jump to.

Before immediately-----

"Kyaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaa!!"

Imari's scream echoed throughout the area.

"……Tooru you pervert. Tooru you lecher. Tooru you beast"

After the game of tag ended and I was in the middle of heading back to the western building-----

Several abusive words came from Imari who is glaring at me.

"Like I said, It wasn't on purpose……"

"Even though it was not on purpose, it is still a fact that you saw my panties"

At that time, I made a ring with the vines and threw it to Imari the same time I dodged her attack and when she landed, I aimed the moment she landed and hanged her upside down when I pulled the vine; the trap I learned yesterday was a success.

But, it was also a fact that I caused Imari to have an embarrassing experience.

"Si-since I was the only one who saw it, so it's considered a safe right? Also, I ran immediately after confirming the trap worked so I did not see much……."

"Who was the one that said [Hahaha, how naïve Imari. I have already seen through that attack from last time-----Towaaah!?] before running away with a red face?"

She poked my cheeks.

"Sorry……."

"Fuuun? I wonder if I should add up the debts while you're reflecting on this…….ah, now that I think about it carefully, you did touch my breast on the first day so that makes it 3 debts. Also, not only do you have a super cute <<Duo>> called Julie, you get to sleep with her in a small tent at night so that makes it 4 debts . Next, since you were so flirty with that beautiful blonde fiancée of yours, so the total debts is 5"

"Wait wait. I know I was bad until the 3rd one but, the 4th and 5th one has totally no relations to Imari's debts at all"

"You found out huh♪"

I made a sigh while making a bitter face at Imari who brought her tongue out.

"Well, forget that for now, I might have said this on the first day but it seems I did not see it incorrectly. Your moves are completely different compared to the entrance ceremony 3 months ago. Just what kind of training did you go through until you could make those types of movements?"

"Ahaha, thank you. I have been training really hard every day, ever since I came to the branch school. I would be made to climb steep cliffs with only my hands, or get thrown off of those cliffs……fufu, the life at the main school sounds like fun……"

Imari's eyes looked like the eyes of a dead fish half-way through.

"Honestly, it was so tough that it made me want to run away, you know? But, I guess it's okay since I got to surprise Tooru this much. Fufuu♪"

She turned around once before making a cheerful smile.

If she can make this expression, then she can probably clear any trials in the future.

---It was at that moment I thought that.

"Aaah, it would be nice if I could be together with Tooru-------uun, wi-with everyone in the main school forever"

Imari showed a lonely face even though it was small.

I understand her feelings really a lot.

We will separate again once this seaside school ends.

The main school group will return back to the Kouryou academy while Imari and the rest will remain on this island.

It's not like we won't ever meet again, but it still feels kind of lonely.

"……..I think so too. I would really like to be with Imari more too"

"-------uh!! Wh-why is it only limited to me!?"

"Hn? Imari is the only one in this spot right now"

"…….That's right. Tooru has that kind of personality. Haa……."

Imari made an exaggerated sigh for some reason.

When the sun set and the sky turned dark, it became time to start preparing our meal.

Ever since the 2nd day, the students have been made to cook for themselves as part of the training. Of course, we were required to make our side-dishes on our own along with the main course.

It took some time since we were completely exhausted from the afternoon training, but it was quite fun cooking while everyone was being lively.

At the same time, I saw an unexpected ability that I had not known until now.

While peeling a potato, I send a look to the girl standing in front of the kitchen with an apron on.

Over there, *ton**ton**ton*…….Tachibana was moving the kitchen knife with a good rhythm.

However, Tachibana wasn't the only one showing unexpected traits.

"Is this much enough, Miyabi?"

Like that, Tachibana called out to Miyabi who was doing other preparations.

"Errr……I think it would be better if it was a little finer"

"I see, understood"

Tachibana started moving the hand holding the knife again.

Without a break, Julie called out to Miyabi this time.

"Miyabi. I finished cutting the eggplant. What should I do next?"

"Yes, errr, can you cut the carrots to bite-sized this time?"

"Ya---"

Julie threw the vegetable to the air and cut it into pieces in an instant like a scene from a manga.

On the other hand, Miyabi was still getting called out to------

"Miyabi-chan. Is this much taste enough? It seems a little bland---"

"Hnn…….*Zu**zu*……Let's see. I guess we should add a teaspoon of salt since it is a little bland. If it still tastes bland after that, please put in half a teaspoon more"

I understand Kibitsu said that before heading back to her post.

"That's a face showing that you are surprised no matter how many times you see it"

While peeling the potatoes along with me, Tora lifted his face and spoke.

"Aah. I feel bad to Miyabi, but I feel she isn't the type to be standing in the center of everything"

"Fuun, I agree on that point"

The event that caused Miyabi's current position occurred yesterday.

At first, the center position for the preparation of meals belonged to Tachibana and Imari for the main school and the branch school respectively, but yesterday night, a particular group failed in their seasoning, causing the air to go gloomy. Since they were completely exhausted and the food they made------the big fun after their training, was a failure. It was only normal for the air to go gloomy at that point.

Miyabi was the one that changed that atmosphere in one go.

"Ma-maybe we can change the taste a bit……..maybe……."

After mumbling that, I pushed Miyabi's back and brought her to the food that had failed.

Miyabi confirmed the taste of the failed food before, starting to add the flavoring in.

She then fixed the smell with herbs and within a few minutes she changed the taste of inedible food to------it's not that it was wonderful, but it became something manageable.

Today's situation was because of that result.

(I have no talent huh…….)

The girl who abused herself like that on the very day of enrollment.

However, that was not true. That's because, no matter what Miyabi thinks about herself, she was currently being relied on by everyone.

When I looked at her working hard in the position she was being perplexed in, I naturally made a smile.

"……..Tooru. Grinning while staring at a girl is a little disgusting you know"

"----!? I-it's not like I was grinning…….wait, Ouwahh!?"

Thanks to the lack of composure caused by Tora's comment, I dropped the potato I was holding.

Even though I went to pick it up, I accidentally kicked it like a ball (as I was panicking) and the potato flew even further away.

"Wa-wait for me---!"

"What are you doing you idiot……"

I chased after the potato while hearing a tired voice behind me.

I picked it up at a small dark path slightly far away from the hall----and I stopped moving the moment I raised my face.

That's because a girl with her dark hair tied into two sides and in a gothic dress was standing there.

"Go-good evening, chairman"

"……you look like you're having fun, Kokonoe Tooru"

"Yes, well……."

"It is a good thing"

The chairman made a small giggle.

"Tomorrow is the last day you will receive training on this island. Please be careful not to get injured"

She then started walking with her assistant Mikuni-sensei who was following her like a shadow.

"Ah……..."

I should be considerate and say my thanks before lowering my head and returning to Tora.

However, I realized something when I heard the chairman's words.

“Is there anything wrong?”

“N-no, it's nothing much-------there’s no way huh……errr. I misunderstood the chairman before. So I am very sorry”

I took a deep bow.

“Ahra, what kind of misunderstanding did you make?”

“Do you remember the conversation we had during the << Qualification ceremony>>?”

Yes, the chairman nodded and I continued my words.

“I thought the chairman was a heartless person at that time. I thought you were someone……..that is able to perform that cruel exam and play with someone's future calmly without any disturbance in your heart. But when I came to this island and found out that Imari-----the people that failed the exam were enrolled here, I found out I was wrong. I felt that when the chairman apologized to us at that time”

The chairman swung her head and made a soft smile.

"Kokonoe Tooru. It is your right to comment on what kind of a human I am. However, I do accept being a heartless person. That's because, I think it is only normal to eliminate you all by the tough trials that I will be preparing from now on"

That was something normal for the leader of the academy meant to nurture capable people wanted by the Dawn organization.

But I can't think her thoughts are heartless because of that.

It was our wish to be in Kouryou, so it was very natural to drop people who are unable to bring results there.

"Chairman. To chairman, I-----"

"Oh my, Tooru. Are you going to confess your love here? That's what you should be doing to me, right? I think this is impossible, but does Tooru have a loli fetish?"

Lilith was the one that interrupted my words.

Yellow Topaz

I thought her glowing blonde hair from the light coming the hall reaching this small path was beautiful for an instant but, now wasn't the time for that.

"Don't make any weird misunderstandings. I am just------"

"The person herself is calling herself heartless, isn't it okay already? It's only normal for peoples' opinions to differ"

"That is completely correct, Lilith=Bristol……..that is the case, Kokonoe Tooru. Do you get it now?"

I think that's true.

I did think that' but I had a strong urge to tell the chairman that it was not true and was about to open my mouth------

"You should stop now. This girl may talk like this but; she is actually a shy person. Seriously, she isn't honest at all"

Lilith whispered into my ears.

It was however not a soft voice because it was quiet here so, it reached the chairman's ears too.

"……..Mikuni, let's go"

Unable to hide her dissatisfaction, the chairman frowned a little before walking away.

"Have a good day, Kokonoe Tooru. I will be expecting much from you, from now on"

The chairman left those words for last and left for the western building with Mikuni-sensei.

I was left alone with Lilith there, and-------

"*Giggle*. The part of her running away is because she is unable to retort; that bulls-eye still makes her a child"

"…….hey. No matter if you are the <<Exception>>, I think it's bad to anger the chairman"

"Oh, isn't that cute"

Lilith did not show any signs of reflection at my tired reply.

"Leaving that aside, I got shocked when I found out Tooru had a loli fetish"

"You know it's all wrong after hearing the whole situation, so which mouth is it that's saying you're shocked?"

"Of course, with this mouth"

Lilith linked her arm with mine before looking at me and touching her red lips with her finger.

I thought back to the moment those light red glossy lips kissed my cheek and *doki**doki* my heart started pumping hard-----,but I quickly unlinked our arms before she found out about it.

"O-okay then, I have to get back to Tora or else I will get scolded"

"Hnn mouu. Oh Tooru! Wait for me!!"

When I got back to Tora with that blaming voice coming behind me, it seems he saw me as I was running away from her and again [What are you doing, you idiot……] a warm greeting was waiting for me.

Since it had been established that today was the hottest day of this summer, it was hard to sleep at night.

Nonetheless most of the students had fallen asleep before the date changed, because we were exhausted from the training; I was one of those students, but…….

"…….you have me, and you still sleep with this girl in this small place every day, oh Tooru-----Hn moouu"

I felt my name get called and my consciousness got a little clearer.

"Well then. I have to prepare to sleep"

(What……is this……..? Julie's sleep talking……? Well, forget it……)

Even though I could hear the rustling sound, it did not beat my sleepiness and my consciousness started to sink again.

"Hn, it's a little embarrassing like this. But I can't sleep if I don't do this…….I know, if I do this then……un, problem solved. Good night, Tooru…….*Chuu*"

In the brink of my consciousness getting cut, I could feel something touching my cheeks.

Who knows how long had passed since then------

"Hnn……it's hot……."

I could hear Julie's mumbling in the dark.

The rustling sound that I could hear next was probably because she took off the bed cover of her sleeping bag.

Although I could feel Julie squirming around, it turned quiet not long after and I once again lost my body to the sleepiness.

I knew it was still dark outside even though my eyelids were closed, and I could hear the sound of birds chirping.

Mixed in with those chirpings------

"Tooru……."

My name was suddenly whispered into my ears.

"Tooru, I love you……"

I completely woke up when I heard those sweet whispers next.

(Wha……!? Ju-Julie!?)

It wasn't only those sweet words. Julie was holding my arm tightly as if to show her behavior.

Her soft and those ***voluptuous*** bulges were pushed onto me.

(Uwah, wait, eh, soft, wait, if she clings onto me, her breast will ……Ah-re?)

Big.

What did you ask? It's obviously the soft object touching my elbow.

"Hnn…….it's tea time Tooru……"

"-----!?"

The moment I realized it wasn't Julie's voice, I raised my upper body.

"Ah, ah-re?"

I turned around and tried to confirm the owner of that voice but , another problem was added into the confusion.

My vision is dark. The dark I was experiencing was pure darkness and rather, I can't open my eyes in the first place.

(What is this? A blindfold…….?)

After I touched my face in panic, there was a cloth tied around my head to hide my sight.

While having a huge amount of question marks popping in my head, I took off the blindfold to find out that it was quite bright outside.

(Just what is this?.....wait, more importantly, whose voice was------“

I became speechless when I turned around.

No matter how many times I see this situation, I would still remain speechless regardless.

That’s because there are 2 beautiful girls sleeping in this tent.

What’s more they are completely naked.

“
uuuu

"Nuu…….Tooru…….Good morning……."

Maybe she noticed me waking up; Lilith scratched her eyes while raising her body.

When she did that, *tayun**puru**puru*……..her 2 bulges made a big jiggle and it was probably the nature of a sad man to automatically look at it.

(No no no no no no, don't don't don't don't don't, must not look ------!!)

Even though I covered my eyes with my hands in panic, that overwhelming fleshy appearance has vividly been burned into the back of my eyelids.

It was the revival of the goddess of love and beauty that was told in the legends-----

I received an attack that could make me hallucinate like that forever from the gold girl.

"Lea-Lea-Lilith!! Why are you naked!?"

I'll leave out the fact that she sneaked in.

"What do mean by why…….I can't sleep unless I take off my clothes……."

She probably hasn't slept enough. She answered my question while dozing off.

"Ah……..you can't, Tooru…….you must not take your blindfold off…….it will be embarrassing……"

Then put some clothes on and sleep, was what I thought but, that might be something she won't give up doing.

"I get it. I get it already so put on some clothes……..!!"

"Mou, I have no choice……."

Bafuu. After nodding, Lilith once again lay on the bed and started sleeping again.

(Just who is the one having no choice……..)

Julie slowly woke up this time just when I was completely tired from waking up.

"Good morning, Tooru……."

"Aah, Good morning, Juli------"

(Wait, I must not look there too------!!)

Different from Lilith's certain fleshy part; hers were not jiggling at allllllll.

However, her Silver (Silver Blonde) hair, white (Snow white) skin and that magical fairy-like appearance told in fairy-tales has been burned into my eyes.

"Tooru……..?"

Julie was completely oblivious to my confusing troubles------it was probably on the level where it would not be over exaggerated if I called it a war and was making a dazed expression while tilting her small head.

“La-last night was hot. I understand that. But it's morning now. That’s why put your clothes on!!”

“Ya---……”

Bofuu. While nodding, Julie lies back on the mat again before starting to sleep comfortably.

(No seriously, why are you going back to sleep……)

I made a sigh deeper than the sea to the 2 beauties sleeping comfortably.

At that moment-----

“Kokonoe, are you awake?”

“uuuuuuh!?”

My heart skipped a beat when my name was called from outside the tent.

I did not need to confirm who it was----it was Tachibana. My morning training is still being continued in this seaside too, and she would come to wake me up if I was late at the promised time.

“Are you still sleeping?”

"I am awake! I am awake so!! I will go out soon so wait there!!"

When I called outside with a voice soft enough to avoid waking Julie and Lilith, and [I understand] was replied back.

(Tha-that was dangerous……)

I placed my hands on my chest which was beating really hard while recalling Tachibana shaking my shoulders when she came into the tent yesterday morning to wake me up from oversleeping.

If I was still sleeping just now, and she came inside-------

(I don't want to think about itttt……!!)

I felt a chill at my back.

"Julie, Lilith. Put on your clothes when you wake up"

[Ya--…….][I get it, mouu……..]

I used the sleeping bag and placed it on top of them as a replacement for the bed cover before heading out while carefully preventing Tachibana from knowing the inside situation.

"Good morning, Kokonoe. It's a refreshing morning today"

"That's true……it really is comfortable morning……."

"…….your expression doesn't match your words at all though"

"Don't mind it……."

Around the time for breakfast preparations, we wrapped up the training and I headed back to the hall with Tachibana.

Mid-way-------my stomach growled and it was mixed with the birds chirping which could be heard from the forest.

"Fufuu, your body is far from being full"

"If you understand that, then let me eat more meat-------"

"No"

She answered immediately with a smile.

When I dropped my shoulders in disappointment, my stomach made a big growl again as if to conspire with my actions.

Since my stomach started *Guu**guu* growling as if to show my dissatisfaction, I made a bitter smile and-----

"Puu……hahaha. Kokonoe, your timing is just too good; it should have a limit, Fufu,hahahaha"

Tachibana might have reached her own limit because she grabbed her stomach while placing her hand on her mouth while laughing hard.

"It's not that funny. Also, look in front when you walk or you'll hit a branch"

The place we are walking right now was a promenade used as a shortcut from the woods to the hall.

It's just like an animal trail and since there were branches extending to our face level everywhere, we could meet a painful experience if we didn't look in front properly.

"I won't do something that dumb-----Puwahh!?"

There is a dumb girl who received a painful experience in front of me.

Not only did Tachibana hit the branch, she panicked because a spider nest got stuck onto her.

"Hyaaaaaa, Koko-Kokonoe. Tak-take it off, please……..!"

"I get it. I'll take it off immediately so stay still"

I nodded and made a small wry smile at Tachibana who was begging for help while moving restlessly to get rid of the spider nest on her face.

"So-sorry……err……the ***main thing*** is not on me right?"

"Main thing? Aah, the spider huh, nope it's not on you"

Tachibana let out a relieved breath when she heard my reply.

"You bad with it?"

"……we-well, it's embarrassing but, yeah"

"It's not embarrassing you know? Everyone has something they're bad with"

(…….like Tachibana during meals)

Not knowing anything about the sentence I swallowed before it came out, Tachibana became bashful.

"I-It'll be a big help if you say that------but, please keep it a secret from the others okay? .....well, Miyabi found out on the first day itself though"

"I get it……..okay, everything is off-----ah"

"Ah?"

Just when I stopped my words mid-way, Tachibana opened her eyes wide.

Kasa…….

Tachibana noticed ***that*** riding on her shoulders and her face turned into a stiff expression.

"Hiiiiyaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaa!?"

"O-oi Tachibana!? Where are you going------Oi, wait! I'll take it off for you!!"

Tachibana shouted and started running, before I chased after her in panic.

"Fyaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaa don't comeeeeeeeeeeeeeeeeeeeeeeeee!!"

It might be something said to the spider but, it's rather confusing for the one chasing her.

"------!! Dangerous!"

The moment Tachibana was about to slam into a tree, I caught her hand and pulled it strongly.

--But, It was too strong and *Bofuu* Tachibana's face was buried into my chest.

"Puwah!?"

"Sorry. Are you okay?"

"A-aah, sorry……Spi-spider!!"

Although she regained her composure for an instant from the impact when she buried her face in my chest, she was almost close to panic again.

"Wait, calm down!"

Tachibana hugged me tightly and I grabbed the spider and tossed it away.

"I took it off already so calm down"

"Re-really……?"

With her usual dignified atmosphere gone somewhere, Tachibana looked up at me with tears in her eyes.

While nodding, I pointed at the spider walking on the grass and Tachibana took a big sigh.

"Uuu……I showed you something pathetic……"

"It's okay. Just like what I said just now, everyone has something they are bad with. Also, thank god you weren't hurt"

"Kokonoe……*giggle*, that's true. I have to thank you for that"

When I smiled at her while saying there was no need to be embarrassed, Tachibana softened her expression.

My heart pounded a little the moment I saw that soft smile which was different from the usual.

(Uh, your face is too close……..)

Since the situation occurred just a few moments ago, it seems Tachibana had not realized that she was being hugged. If she realized this, there would be no mistake she would call me shameless or perverted.

When I was about to let go before that happened; this happened when I was about to separate our bodies-----

"Ah……"

An intruding rustling sound appeared together with a soft voice of a 3rd person.

The person standing in front us when we moved our sights there was-----Miyabi.

"I-is that so. A spider huh……you were both hugging each other, so I was close to making a misunderstanding in shock, ahaha…….."

After explaining to Miyabi why we were hugging each other, she quickly believed our story because it seems she knew Tachibana was bad with spiders.

"I'm ashamed……"

Tachibana who said that had her cheeks blushing a little.

"……..That's nice"

"What is?"

"Fuee!? Errrrr, well, a spider got onto my shoulders too just now so, errr, neh"

Meaning, she had run with full strength just like Tachibana and it dropped off somewhere before she knew it.

She probably thought I would take it off for her if I was nearby.

"However, it seriously is a life saver you believed it immediately"

I nodded beside Tachibana when she made a relieved sigh.

"Seriously. If it was the other way around, you would be shouting shamelessly before running away"

[The other way around……?][What do you mean?]

Both of them asked me back together.

It seems the sentence was not complete and the meaning was not clear to them.

"I was referring to the assumption that if I was hugging Miyabi, and we were seen by Tachibana instead"

“”----------!!””

“I-I-I, so-so-something like that, errrr, spider, where is the spider…….!?”

“Kokonoe! Wh-what kind of perverted things were you thinking about……!!”

“…….it’s just an assumption”

I made a sigh to the both of them who were panicking even though I said it was an assumption beforehand.

“Oh yeah, why are you here this early in the morning Miyabi?”

“I was coming back from my morning run”

“I see. You are still continuing that even though it’s the seaside school”

“U-un……..That’s because I would be late by one lap from Tooru-kun if I don’t work hard”

“Haha, you can’t be careless at all”

“Ahahaha…….”

“-------?”

Tachibana made a curious face at our conversation. Her reaction was probably normal since she didn’t know I told Miyabi that I wouldn’t be running with her in the mornings for a while.

"B-by the way, does Tooru-kun have any plans for tomorrow since it's a rest day?"

Miyabi changed the conversation; she might have felt sorry for Tachibana who was unable to join in the conversation.

There is no training tomorrow, the 6th day, and it was a day given to us to move around freely.

Nonetheless, I have nothing special planned so I told her I was thinking of just resting.

"If that's the case then why not come with us? I invited Imari and the rest last night but, I think it's more fun if there are more people if we are going to play anyway"

"Aah, okay. But where are we going?"

There were no game facilities on this island and the only places here were the branch school and the harbor.

Just where are we going to go in an environment like that.

"What are you saying……..it's summer now. What's more the sea is surrounding the island. Meaning, it's obvious that we would be playing at the sea"

"…….now that I think about, the sea is a good place to play "

We were made to swim with our clothes on the first day, run on top of logs floating in the sea, and were made to have a <<Blaze practice>> with our lower bodies submerged, so the sea had completely turned into a tough training spot for me.

"Well anyways, I understand. Is it okay if I invite Tora and the others?"

"Aah, I don't mind"

Like this, we passed through the promenade right when I filled in tomorrow's schedule.

When we got back to the hall, there were some students awake who were already cleaning up their tents.

"Alright, I have to go around waking the people who are still sleeping"

It was a very Tachibana-like announcement. As expected from the chairman-----which I am secretly calling her-----she still goes around waking everyone up, not only in the dorm but during the seaside school too.

"I have to wake Julie up too"

Julie's and my tent was still up nearby and the Silver hair (Silver Blonde) girl could not be seen in the hall. She was probably still sleeping since she didn't sleep much last night.

"Kokonoe. Even though you live with her normally, I think it's a problem looking at a girl's sleeping face. I'll wake her up instead "

"I get it. Then please"

Honestly, I have something against that but, I'll follow Tachibana's will.

"I'll go clean up the tent"

"I see. I'll leave that to you, Miyabi"

Leaving those words, Miyabi went back to her tent and we went back to my tent.

"But even so, it's quite rare for Julie to oversleep"

"It was a hot night last night. She couldn't sleep until it became late because it was that hot"

"I see. I am a little reluctant to do so but, it's time already"

Replying back with an ***I have no choice***, she stopped in front of the tent.

(Ah-re? Am I forgetting something……..)

"------uuuh!! Tac-Tachibana waitttttttt!!"

My shout was useless and Tachibana opened the tent entrance.

What could be seen across Tachibana's shoulder were the color silver, gold and also-----skin color.

"Uuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuu!?"

Tachibana froze.

"……"

She kept quiet.

[Nuu……..is it morning already, Tooru……..?][Fuwah, ah……
……what is it, you sure are noisy…….]

Both of them woke up when the morning sun shined inside and they looked at us with tired eyes.

Tachibana regained her consciousness and----shouted.

"Koko-Kokonoe you, Pe-per-Perverrrrrrrrrrrrrrttttttttttt----------
---!!"

Part 2

The 5th day of the training had ended.

The training camp with the alias of a seaside school ended today.

It was a completely free day on the 6th day (which is tomorrow) and even though they were still unable to leave the island, the students had been pardoned to do whatever they wanted there.

Heading back to the academy would probably be enough to allow them time to relax, but the reason for giving them a rest day on the island had the same simple meaning as giving candy to a child. Especially for the main school, there were quite a lot of

students who had gotten excited when they heard that they were headed to a seaside school located on a southern island.

During the night before the final day everyone was excited for-----

There were several girls gathered in the cafeteria.

Julie, Tomoe, Miyabi, Kibitsu and one more person were from the main school.

Imari and three other girls were from the branch school.

There were a total of 9 girls there snacking on candies while talking.

They were the group that had gotten the closest in those 5 days of training.

The conversation started with what they should do tomorrow, but then it changed to a very ordinary topic.

It was getting late into the night and------

"Neh neh, what do you think about the boys in the main school ?"

The moment the branch school girl------the <<Kunai>> user Miwa said that, the students from the main school got excited.

---that's what she thought but, only one person responded from there.

The people that did not respond-----Julie, Tomoe, and Kibitsu made an expression as if they had no idea what she meant. Miyabi twitched her shoulders for only an instant, but luckily there was no one that noticed that.

"What do you mean by that?"

"It's about, is there a boy you are thinking about, Tomoe"

The other main school girl guidedthe discussion here and Tomoe nodded as if she understood.

"……Fumu. If you say it's just thinking about, then it's going to be Tora or Kokonoe I guess"

6 girls excluding Julie and Kibitsu reacted to Tomoe's words.

"Both of them are strong. To me------mu? What's wrong, everyone?"

6 girls excluding Julie and Kibitsu reacted to Tomoe's words again------rather, they collapsed.

"Ahaha…….It's that so-called girl talk and the standards for it are love talks……."

Tomoe turned red when she realized it was a misunderstanding after hearing Imari's explanation of the topic while making a wry smile.

"Sorry, I just thought……"

After some of them laughed at Tomoe's reaction, one girl from the branch school opened her mouth next.

[There are a lot of cool guys in the main school right? Like Izumi-kun. Judging by the failures we have in the branch school, it 's an envious thing] [It's better to be careful around him since he likes girls]

[Ah, I think I'll pick Tora-kun. He is small and cute] [But isn't he kind of scary?] [I will definitely pick Tatsu-kun! Guys with muscles are awesome] [[[No way]]]

When anyone of them brought out a boys' name then, someone would *kya**kya* react back nosily.

"Let's see……I guess for me----it would be Tooru"

"----!!"

Several people reacted when Imari said Tooru's name.

[Like I thought. I kept thinking you were suspicious somehow. But I kind of understand, Kokonoe-kun is quite handsome] [Agree] [He lacks muscles though] [Ignore]

"You're wrong. It's not because of his face but rather, I could get along with him. It's easy to talk with him, and I mean very easy"

Miyabi got worried when she saw Imari smiling while talking.

She listens to the conversation quietly while her heartbeat was increasing.

"Well, us branch school students have no idea when we would meet the main school students again once the seaside school ends, so I will avoid having a serious relationship. More importantly, I have something I have to do no matter what"

"Ah, that's so cruel. Imari has something more important than me……..."

"Ahaha, don't worry, I love you the most in this world♪"

Miyabi relaxed seeing Imari replying back to Miwa who was being playful.

Having the appearance that could make her eyes open wide even though she is the same gender, the beauties Julie and Lilith are normally around Tooru. What's more, Tomoe who was a beauty with an adult atmosphere around her has been closing in the gap using the morning training recently.

Miyabi thought she had no way to oppose if Imari, on top of having an appearance with nothing to criticize, and who has a cheerful and refreshing personality joins into that group.

That is why it was normal for her to relax.

Having completely no faith in herself, Miyabi didn't know she was quite popular with the guys. [The number 1 girl I want to protect] [The breast of the girl I want to bury my face in Number 1], she has 2 magnificent titles.

“Speaking about Kokonoe-kun. Miyabi-chan likes him too, right ?”

“uuuh!?”

Kibitsu was the one that made a devastating comment with a dazed tone.

Naturally, Miyabi became the center of attention.

“Mo-Mo-Momo-chan!? I-I-I-----“

“That’s because, you often talk about Kokonoe-kun. And you’re really close with him right”

Kibitsu had no ill intentions. It was probably because of her absentminded personality that she said the things she was thinking about. There were times good things happened because of that but; the words she said right now did not make Miyabi happy at all.

“He is a f-friend. I-I-it’s true I think he is easier to talk with compared to the others though…….!”

“Is that so?”

"Un, un…….!"

*Puun**puun* Miyabi made big nods but-----

"…….Iyah, everyone noticed that already Hotaka. Rather, your attitude is so obvious"

Everyone's sights moved back to Miyabi immediately when the main school girl mumbled that.

"Fuuee…….!?"

"I-is that so, Miyabi……?"

The person closest to Miyabi at this spot but who at the same time was completely oblivious to Miyabi's feelings to Tooru------ Tomoe asked back with a shocked expression.

"Ah……..ah, uu……..err…… ……."

At last Miyabi's face turned red, before hanging her head down silently.

That reaction was the same as confessing the truth and even Tomoe figured that out.

"I see, Miyabi likes Kokonoe……"

"Ahaha. I guess I was right"

"U,uu…….errr, Momo-chan. Please keep it a secret from Tooru-kun……."

"Uun, of course"

"Kokonoe's <<Duo>> and roommate must not be forgotten in this. Was there anything you wanted to say when you heard that, Julie?"

Everyone's sights focused on Julie when the main school girl said that.

Julie who became the center of attention-----

"……..*suu*……*suu*……."

She was sleeping.

Almost everyone there was close to falling off their chairs when they saw her dozing off.

"Ahaha…….it's about time to go to bed"

Imari made a wry smile. After she continued the sentence by telling everyone to head back to their tents since there was still tomorrow, several of them made unsatisfied and reluctant faces but still nodded.

Tomoe headed out of the cafeteria while pulling Julie who was still in a mid-dreamland state.

After that, Kibitsu, Miwa and the others headed out. Miyabi and Imari were walking behind all of them.

"I somehow felt that was that case, but it's just like what I guess after all"

"U-unn……..."

"Fufu. I understand those feelings very much. If I managed to go to the main school, I would most likely……..uun, I would probably fall for him"

Miyabi had a startled face when Imari declared that.

"I said this just now too but, I could get along with him and he is easy to talk with, I also think his personality is good…… and, I think this may be unrelated but, it's true that he is quite cool "

"E-err……."

"It's okay; you don't have to look that uneasy. This was also something I said just now, but I have something I need to do no matter what, compared to love"

Imari felt her chest hurting a bit after finishing her sentence and told herself it can't be helped and to come to terms with it.

There might be a day when she might regret this choice.

However, Imari decided to end her feelings for Tooru secretly since she had no time to be all lovey-dovey in order to fulfill her wish.

"E-err……Is it okay if I ask what Imari has to do……..?"

"Ahh……Hnnn……well, I don't mind I guess. In exchange , please keep it a secret from Tooru okay?"

While wondering why Tooru's name came up, Miyabi nodded.

"I need money. A lot of it, neh"

Miyabi got shocked at those vulgar words which could not be topped any more.

Although she was shocked, she waited for the next sentence. Even though she had known her for only few days, she thought there should be a reason why someone like Imari would say something like that.

"My family works in a small factory but, how should I say this, managing it is a little tough. We are often told that it's better to close it, but my father and the workers there are working hard because they don't want to close the company that my deceased grand-father worked so hard to build up. My sisters and I love our grandfather very much, so we agreed to say no to shutting the company down and often think about ways to help them somehow "

"Ah…… so you became an <<Exceed>> for that……?"

"Bingo♪ Originally I thought of finding a job once I graduated middle school. My parents rejected that but I wanted to do something------and suddenly on a certain day, a member of the Dawn organization came over and told me about the Kouryou academy"

Because of those circumstances, Imari decided to go to Kouryou academy.

If she joined the dawn organization after graduating, it would probably be possible to gain an income large enough to reorganize her family factory. Also, after some negotiation with the academy side, most of the money provided monthly from the academy will be sent back to her house.

"So that's why……. Now I understand why you told me not to tell Tooru-kun……."

"Looking at Tooru's personality, he would probably be very worried about it even though he knows it won't be a problem since I am in the branch school. So, please keep this a secret between us"

Imari placed her index finger on her lips and smiled.

Miyabi followed her and smiled too.

She smiled while harboring respect for the girl the same age as her with strong beliefs in her heart.

"So with that said, becoming stronger is more important to me than love, which makes me a sad muscle-brain woman……..that 's why Miyabi, there are other people you should be more worried about than me"

Even though 3 faces popped up in Miyabi's mind, Imari was actually referring to Lilith. That's because she has seen her show her affections to Tooru several times already regardless of the public gazes.

Tomoe can be said to have a good relationship with Tooru but she looks like a friend and although Imari was shocked about Julie having a <<Duo>> relationship with him at first, she could somehow understand their actual relationship in just a few days.

They believe each other and although their distance was close, her feelings are no different than those of a family's.

That's all; leaving Tomoe out, Imari's judgment at this point could be said to be generally correct.

--Of course, she doesn't know what kind of changes would happen in the future.

"Well, Tooru is probably the strongest enemy. How should I put it, he is kind of dense or off-topic……."

After seeing Imari sigh, Miyabi made a wry smile when she thought of several events that came to mind.

"Good luck, Miyabi. He won't notice if you don't step in more"

Miyabi nodded, when Imari winked one eye.

"I-I will work harder…….errr, Imari-chan…..Thank you"

"You're welcome. Miyabi, Fight♪"

"U-un……..!"

Half an hour had passed since the girls headed back to their respective tents after the love talk.

Most of the students had turned off their lights and started sleeping.

Tomoe and Miyabi's tent was wrapped in darkness too but------

"……..Miyabi. Are you still awake?"

"…….Uun, I am"

"No err…….i-it's about the conversation just now. Err…….. it's about Mi-miyabi liking Kokonoe……."

"U-un….it's real I guess……."

Miyabi's nod could be felt in the darkness.

"I see……."

Tomoe admits that she is not sensitive to love related feelings.

Even so she could only be shocked when she found out that her friend, who she has been eating and sleeping with for 3 months, was having affections for the closest guy-friend she had.

However, now that she has calmed down somewhat since some time has passed since she found out, Tomoe thought of confirming it again.

"Work hard, Miyabi. I'll cheer for you"

"Eh……? Ah……U-un…….I'll do so, but……"

After hearing Tomoe's words, Miyabi made a crisp answer-----

"Is it really okay……?"

She asked on the verge of puzzlement.

"About what?"

"U-uun, nothing at all. Ahaha……"

Repling back with a curious tone, Miyabi swung her head despite the darkness.

"------? Well forget it. Anyways, you can call me if there is something you need help with. Although, it has to be within my limits okay"

"Unn……thank you, Tomoe-chan"

"Umu…….however, don't expect good strategies from me okay? It seems I am also slow regarding love"

Miyabi giggled at Tomoe's self-evaluation. Tomoe also laughed with her.

Not long later, both of them ended their talk after saying good night until tomorrow.

In the darkness, Miyabi vividly recalled the conversation she had just now.

(Was it just my misunderstanding……..?)

By Miyabi's judgment, she thought Tomoe should have a considerable amount of affection for Tooru.

But judging by Tomoe's tone, she could not perceive any of those feelings on her end.

That made Miyabi feel relieved.

That was because she clearly understood the charms the girl Tachibana Tomoe had since she was close to her.

(I shouldn't be relieved yet. There is still Lilith-san and Julie-chan…….I have to step in more, just as Imari-chan said…….. Fight on, me……..!)

Miyabi clenched her fist tightly and vowed to work a little harder from tomorrow onward.

Although her eyes were closed, Tomoe's back was facing Miyabi and was still unable to fall asleep.

(……..Miyabi likes Kokonoe huh. Why didn't I notice that before……..)

She could agree in a lot of ways once she recalled some events.

Tooru's name often comes from Miyabi's mouth, and she has few memories of her talking with other guys compared to Tooru. Although she did somewhat exchange some words to Tora and Tatsu, Tooru would definitely be around the area when that happens.

(Kokonoe and Miyabi huh…….)

Quiet and shy. Tomoe wished for the love of the hard working girl to come true.

Cheerful and kind, although the boy was a little dense, he would often think about his comrades; she wished that their love would become mutual. Until Tooru's face appeared in her mind.

Tokun…….

(-----what is this?)

Her heartbeat became a little faster.

She also felt her breathing getting rougher.

Tomoe reached a conclusion after thinking about her body condition.

(I might be worried about Miyabi more than I thought……)

But, thinking about such a thing was worthless now.

After Tomoe gave up thinking about it and decided to go to sleep, she released her body to the drowsiness that was gradually getting stronger.

*Tokun**Tokun**Tokun*…….

Tomoe did not notice the reason for her fast heartbeat.

Chapter 5 『I Love You

Part 1

[Julie-chan, you are so slim and fair-skinned, just like I thought. How nice……] [Neeh--. She's also small and very cute♪] [Thank you very much. but, I hope I grow a little taller] [You're wrong, Julie-chan! It's better when you're small!] [Is that so……. but my reach is too short, so I want to become taller] [I think your reason for growing is weird, Julie…….] [------?]

[Hey, save the talking until after we're done changing] [Ahaha, that's true……..wait, Tomoe you look stylish. Places that are meant to come out are out and you're still slim] [Just how many guys have you seduced before now!?] [I-I haven't seduced anyone] [Then how about seducing Kokonoe-kun♪ He would definitely fall just like that] [Seduce…….Ko-Kokonoe……..Huh!? Wh-what are you saying, Sensei!!]

*kyai**kyai* I could hear the happy commotion coming from the cave behind me.

When their voices started appearing, I had no idea what they were talking about even though I could recognize familiar voices and tones within it. Rather----

(Did they forget that I'm here…….?)

I felt my name had been mentioned several times, but it seemed my presence had completely escaped from their memories; it also looked like they wouldn't be done changing any time soon.

I made a sigh under the scorching sunlight.

(Why does this always have to happen……..)

Regarding what I was doing right then-----I was standing guard at the cave entrance to prevent anyone from coming close and peeping on the girls changing. Unlike myself, who changed in the tent before heading out, it seemed that the girls were in the middle of changing inside the cave------which was a dead end with a 10 meter space.

Because of that, I had been made to stand guard and was forced to go through this awkward situation.

Of course, the girl talk was still on-going during that time----

[I thought this during bath time too but, Hotaka-san has some amazing ones huh. How big is your cup size?] [Tha-that's a little……..] [Kuhah, if you won't answer…..this will happen]

[Hyaau…….sto-stop, Sensei, Fuaa……ah, nuu, st-stop, don't fondle me, fuann……] [Amazing♪ my fingers are sinking in] [Ah, I'll touch them too. Uwah, it's true!! Kuh, I am so jealous!! I'll do this to these tyrants!!] [Kuhahah, do this too while you're at it Soryah, pinchy pinch♪] [Hyaa, Hyaaaaaaa…….do-don 't pinch…….Hyuuu……..] [It's going to be worse if you

don’t answer you know?] [I-I’ll tell you, I’ll tell you so err, its F……HnKuuuun!! Haa, haa……..Hafuu……]

I could hear rough and seductive breathing, and my imagination was unnecessarily going wild because I couldn't see; I then gulped in the end.

(Mi-Miyabi has the F…….The fantasy F……----nonono, it isn't the time to be drinking my saliva!!)

In order to get rid of the delusions in my head, I swung my head vigorously.

(Concentrate! Concentrate on guarding…….! I am monitoring the surroundings……..!!)

I covered my ears and tried my best to decrease my worldly desires by chanting tongue-twisters in my head.

I then wished they would get done changing soon.

……..if this keeps up, something dreadful would happen to my ethical standards.

"Err so, the biggest breast goes to Miyabi, Imari is 3 ranks below and another 2 ranks below will go to Julie-chan. Usa-sensei is 3rd and Tachibana is 1 rank above her. I would be-----"

The result of covering my ears was excellent. Even though I could still somewhat hear their voices, I couldn't hear the content of it.

While making a relieved sigh, I continued my tongue-twister.

Not long after----

My shoulders got poked and I turned around.

At that moment, the girl that popped her face out from behind the rock shade was looking at me shyly.

"Sorry for the wait, Tooru"

After saying that, Julie timidly came out.

"Oou……."

I unintentionally let out my voice.

"How is it?"

"What do mean how……"

A fairy in a white bikini appeared in front of me.

There was more exposure compared to her normal T-shirt appearance and that sent my heart pumping. Also, since the white swimsuit emphasized her white skin, it made my heartbeat pump even faster. On top of that, she had a slender body with modest breasts and slim legs. In addition, the colorful float ring she was holding behind brought out the girlish charms in her.

Her appearance was the combination of slight egotism and loveliness, and it was enough to make me wonder if it was okay to look straight at her.

"I-it's cute…….very cute……."

The words that I could say normally without any discomposure usually, just felt embarrassing somehow now.

"Ya—♪"

Chirin the bell echoed when Julie nodded happily.

At that moment, 5 more girls appeared from the cave.

---however, there was only one person that I had hesitation in calling a 'girl'[3F 1].

Although this was obvious everyone was in their swimsuits, and honestly speaking I was having trouble as to where to look.

Everyone was directing their eyes at me while I was doing that.

"Tooru. You know what we are going to ask, right?"

"……you're going to ask me for my thoughts, right?"

Imari clapped at my answer.

"Correct. You will give us your thoughts on each of us as our male representative♪ Praise us too if you can."

"What do you mean by male representative, I'm the only guy here……."

Today's participants are me, Julie, Miyabi, Tachibana, Imari, Miwa and for some reason Tsukimi was also here; 7 people.

I am undoubtedly the only guy here.

It's not like I wanted to be in this situation. I invited Tora, Tatsu and 2 other close guy friends but------since Tora chose to sleep on the rest day as usual, Tatsu was muscle training with a staff member he got along with, the other 2 wanted to have a good rest and go out on a date with a branch school girl respectively; each of them didn't join because of their own reasons and that has caused this overwhelmingly unbalanced ratio of male and female.

"Okay okay, we will be losing time to play if you don't hurry up and tell us your thoughts, Tooru"

It seems I was not permitted to choose the no comment choice.

"Err, for Imari……."

The swimsuit with frill attachments was tied together with a big characteristic ribbon making it looks cute and that casual atmosphere suits Imari very well. Imari's tight and balanced body was dazzling with a healthy charm.

"I think you have one charming body"

"Bufuu!? Wh-why are you saying something that outrageous suddenly!? What kind of eyes were you using to look at me!?"

"Do-don't misunderstand! I mean it as you have an athlete's body!"

"I-I see…….It's okay if it's like that but, it's not good to put words together that would cause misunderstandings, you said something similar before last time too, seriously……."

*Puri**puri* Imari puffed her cheeks so I decided not to pry any further, and moved my sights beside her.

“Ko-Kokonoe. Don’t look at me that much”

“So-Sorry……Wait a second? Tachibana told me not to look so, it’s okay if I don’t tell you my thoughts right?”

Pikoon I had a good idea as if something flashed up.

“I-I didn't say I don’t want it. Hurry up and say it”

Again, it looks like I am not allowed to give no comments……..

I looked up and down at Tachibana who was having a faint blush on her cheeks while looking away from me.

The deep color swimsuit looks simple at first glance but, the black lace ornaments attached to it brought out Tachibana adult charms. Also adding in her exceptional proportion into the equation, her flowing black hair would attract anyone that looks at her.

“Tachibana is beautiful like I've always thought”

“-----! I-I’m not……..err, not so much worth calling beautiful…..”

“You’re beautiful. Everyone would think the same thing if they saw you”

While she was looking away in embarrassment, her eyes were only looking at me.

"…….Ko-kokonoe too?"

"I've been telling you just now, right?……You're beautiful, Tachibana"

"Yo-you don't have to say it that many times!.....*co-cough* Well, I will gratefully accept your thoughts"

Even though she looked embarrassed and was red, it seems she was satisfied with it. While thinking that's great, I praised Miwa beside her also.

"Ahaha, Kokonoe-kun is cool too. You're more slender in clothes than I thought. It's not to Tatsu-kun's level but, you have nice muscles there♪ …….*Slurp*"

"O-ou, Thanks……"

Her eyes were somewhat scary so I decided to ignore that while moving next to Miyabi----

That's what I thought but, she was wearing a straw hat and cardigan.

"Hey, Miyabi. Hurry up and take off that boring thing"

"Bu-but, I'm bad at swimming and I think this is enough since I would be playing in the shallow water……"

Imari got closer to Miyabi and she panicked. Miwa also joined in at that point---------

“We managed to get Tooru to give his thoughts about everyone else, so take that off♪”

“HyaWaa!?”

2 people teamed up to take off Miyabi’s cardigan and her hat was taken away too.

Like that, Miyabi exposed her swimsuit appearance to me but……

Do----------N!!

Wow. It would be SUGOI[3F 2] in English……..it was in Romanization. Anyways, it's amazing, too amazing. It was hard to maintain my calmness and it was enough to make my thoughts a little crazy. What you ask? I am referring to Miyabi. It might sound very un-classy but, her watermelon sized breasts were swaying around and I was making useless worries about whether or not if those thin strings supporting them would be okay.

“To-Tooru-kun…..?”

“Haah!?”

Miyabi was hugging her breast to run away from my sight and was twisting her body when I became aware about it.

It's also amazing that it could not completely cover it all.

“Tooru. Comment, comment”

Imari poked my elbows.

“Ah-aah…….err-----“

Miyabi was wearing a pale color skirt swimsuit and it has a cute design. However, her volume filled breasts which could not be restrained completely by the swimsuit was enough to be called sensational. I was curious whether the cloth surface was too small or Miyabi’s breasts were too big but, it will remain an eternal mystery since I can’t ask her that.

“I think it’s cute”

“Ah…….ehehe, Thank you……..”

“*Pipi* Yellow card!”

Imari pinched Tachibana’s ribbon and shook it.

“What are you doing. And what's with the Yellow card”

“Tooru. You told that comment to Julie before. R.E.D.O!”

“Uuh. I can’t do anything about it even if you tell me that. Don’t expect an extensive vocabulary from me…….”

"I understand your feelings but, work hard and squeeze those words out. Using the same words to another girl is not even at the impolite level okay?"

"Uguhh, i-I get it. Errrr……"

Even though I hesitated, there were no good words coming up.

That's why, I decided to say what I thought. * Except for the breast part.

"I-it really suits you…….It's the first time I've seen Miyabi in a swimsuit but, I think it's great"

"Tha-thank you, Tooru-kun. Err, it's very embarrassing but…… …..I am very happy about it….."

"I- I see? Then that's great"

"Unn"

It seems she's really happy.

My heart pumped hard because the shy Miyabi looked more charming than usual and the cause of it might be the swimsuit.

Imari was poking that Miyabi in the elbow for some reason.

[…….This is the first time I showed Tooru my swimsuit though] [M-me too] [Well, well…….]

"Okay then, everyone's comment is done so, let's swim"

"…….Wait there <<Irregular>>"

"Your real face is out"

"……..Iyaaan♥ Oh Kokonoe-kun, I wonder if you're forgetting someone important♪"

PyoKonn her rabbit ears swung and there was someone who was directing a pose at me; It's obvious who the person was, it was Tsukimi.

"How is this how is this, these beach specifications♪ Go ahead and tell your comments, YOU"

"……Isn't it nice. It suits you a lot, the bitch specifications"

"Iyaaan, thank you Kokonoe-kun♥ …….Wait a sec you bastard, who the hell is the bitch? Aarrh? Should I fall down accidentally and pull down your swimsuit to expose your Mr. Elephant?"

"It isn't an accident if it's like that……"

She brought her face closer half-way in her words and whispered to me with a DOS voice.

It's true that the beach specification she was referring to was probably the swimsuit material but, she looks like a bunny girl no matter how much I look. Of course, she has a rabbit tail on too. It

would probably make a complete set if she was wearing net tights or stockings, but it would make me want to ask her why she even bothered coming to the beach if she did that.

"So, why are you here……..!?"

"It would be dangerous for you students, so I joined in as a guardian, you shithead"

(Guardian huh…….)

Even though the last day was a free day, everyone was made to put on the armband since it was the rules.

Because of that we can just send out a rescue signal if there is any emergency, so it was incomprehensible that a guardian would be accompanying us.

"……..You just wanted to play"

"Kuhah, Correct. Look, I am interested in you too <<Irregular>>"

Ignore---

The comment war finally ended and all of us warmed up before running to the sea.

Leaving the 2 people from the branch school aside, the main school group has only seen this transparent sea and white beach

on television, so I can understand why everyone was in high spirits since we are in a situation where the whole place was being reserved just for us.

Swimming in the sea, diving into the sea, playing beach ball, each of them started doing what they wanted and just when I was wondering what I should do----

"Tooru, let's swim"

In complete preparations, Julie was already inside the float ring before she took my hand and started running.

I ran to the beach while holding a girl's hand.

Just like the first experience between lovers, my heart was pumping hard but-----

ZaaPaan. Both of us tripped on a big wave the moment we stepped into the sea.

"I was surprised……..Fuwaah!?"

With her eyes opened wide, the next wave covered Julie's head while she was on her butt.

I started laughing when I saw her wet already and she was unable to hide her surprise by blinking several times.

"It's not good to laugh"

Julie splashed water at me with both her hands.

It looks like she was trying to get me wet too, but the amount of water is overwhelmingly insufficient.

I blocked it with my left hand and splashed back with my right hand while laughing before----

“Chance-----!!”

My leg got pulled at the same time a shout suddenly sounded.

Bashaan my whole body got dragged into the sea together with that splashing sound.

“Wh-who is it!?”

After I surfaced my face, I saw the back of someone running away while swaying her ponytail.

“Damn that Imari……..”

Imari then jumped into the sea half-way and swam away.

“Tooru, Tooru”

“Hnn? ……Puuah!?”

Sea water was splashed onto my face when I turned over after Julie called me.

“Payback for laughing”

The smiling Julie looked kind of satisfied.

“I was already wet……”

“But even so”

“Then payback for the payback----“

“The first strike wins”

“Puoooh!?”

My face got splashed with sea water even though I got splashed just now.

“No-now you’ve done it, Julie!”

After shaking my head, I looked to Julie and she did the same thing as Imari, and was about to run away into the sea.

However-----

Spash splash splash……..*Zazaan*.

After advancing a little further, she got pushed back to the beach by the waves.

“-----?”

Julie turned around and got shocked that I did not run that far away before trying to swim away to the sea again.

Spash splash splash……..*Zazaan*. *Kuruu*.

Spash splash splash! *Zazaan*. *Kuruu*.

"------!?"

She did her very best to run away but, since there wasn't much distance opened from me, Julie strengthened her flutter kick but it only increased the water splash size.

However it was as expected from an <<Exceed>>. She advanced a little further ahead and-----

DoPaan.

She got overturned by a big wave and got swallowed into the sea.

"Hahaha……wait, Julie!?"

I had forgotten that Julie could not swim for an instant, but I immediately recalled that fact back before running to her and-----

The splash sprung up to the summer skies and the silver mermaid showed her face from the sea. * However, she was not swimming.

"Julie, are you okay?"

It looks like she did not drown in the shallow waters but, I called out to her just in case.

"Ya---. I was very surprised…."

Julie turned back after appearing, and her upper body was naked.

(Where did her bikini go-------!?)

Lucky or unlucky----------(I'll leave it as lucky)-----since her silver hair was sticking onto her nipples and successfully acting as a guard, I couldn't see everything.

"Ju-Julie! Up, uppp!!"

I turned my back at her and shouted while bringing her attention to the problem.

"Nice weather"

"Not that, your swimsuit!!"

"Ah……."

It seems she finally noticed.

"……Did you see?"

"I-I didn't, it was safe……..it was close though"

"It was a close safe huh. Then there is no problem……..but if you saw it, then I have no choice but to give a you strict punishment."

It seems she would not forgive me even if I saw it accidentally.

"……..I'll ask this just in case but, what kind of punishment?"

"I will splash water on you. Lots and lots of water on you"

I'm already in the sea.

"Okay then, it will be embarrassing if this goes on like this so, I will go fix my swimsuit"

"Aah, I get it"

I nodded while facing my back at Julie.

I guess I'll turn my back at her until she fixes her swimsuit.

The moment I thought that------*Pito*, *Funyuun*.

"Hn?"

Something touched my back suddenly. Something soft.

"My swimsuit is over there, Tooru"

A hand like white fishes was coming out from under my armpits and it pointed a few meters ahead from me.

Thanks to that, I could easily figure out the true identity of the soft objects touching my back.

(Σ@♀π-------!!)

"Ju-Ju-Juliee!?"

"No, Tooru. You must not look here"

Julie hugged me tightly when I was about to turn back in reflex.

Then of course, those modest bulges would glue onto me.

"Wh-wh-why are you sticking onto me…..!?"

"In case the depth is too deep for me to get it alone, I am going to ask Tooru to get it for me. The reason why I am sticking onto you like this is because, I won't end up showing Tooru my embarrassing spots"

(Please feel embarrassed when your breasts are pushing onto me-----!!)

Not knowing what kind of basis of embarrassment Julie has, I shouted inside my heart.

Without any choice, I started walking to the swimsuit while Julie's body was glued onto me.

Puni puni puni puni puni puni puni puni…….

I would feel a soft sensation on my back each time I moved. I was constantly feeling it.

"Tooru. It's hard for me to walk if you slouch……"

Even if you tell me that.

Just like that, I fought against a cotton-like body while having distressful thoughts in the sea, before reaching Julie's bikini top which was floating on the waves-------before I suddenly noticing something.

"Wouldn't it be okay if I just retrieved it alone?"

"…….That's true too"

"Kokonoe, we are going to play beach volleyball now, want to join in too?"

After returning to the shallow waters to take off the water that entered my ears by hopping, Tachibana called out to me.

Right now, I decided that it was probably safe to not head back out there since Julie was playing with Imari and accepted the invitation to play beach volleyball.

"Kuhaha. Don't fail in receiving and push me down <<Irregular >>"

I immediately regretted accepting the offer when the team was organized.

"What's with that unhappy face"

"Not just unhappy, it's disgusted"

"Should I pull down your swimsuit like I thought huh? You'll probably feel good getting *Kyaa**Kyaa* shouted at"

"I will lose my humanity if I feel good in that situation!!"

Can we start already, Tachibana sent a tired voice over and we started the match even though I was reluctant to team up with Tsukimi.

Our opponents were Tachibana and Miwa. However, since Miwa was the only one with a lower <<Level>>, the rules was set that we cannot use our dominant hand to attack as a handicap for her.

Poon Tachibana served the ball and a parabola was drawn in the blue sky.

Tsukimi quickly entered the landing point and received it. Tsukimi then spiked the ball I tossed up-----but Tachibana obstructed it with a block.

[As expected from the honor studentAmazing♪] * It seems she was in her outer personality since Miwa was here too.

"Fufu, I will gratefully accept those words, Tsukimi-sensei"

Both of them looked at each other with a fearless smile but----

"Eh, I was talking about your boobs? I was referring to the fact that it made a super *Boin* bounce when you landed on the ground♥"

"Bo-Booinn!?"

Tachibana's face turned red instantly and she covered her chest.

"Kokonoe you think so too right?"

"Don't push it onto me!!"

"Ko-ko-Kokonoe! A guy like you; were you looking at me with those shameless eyes!?"

"I didn't look!!"

And even though I replied that, it became hard to change my thoughts now that I got conscious about it and the game continued while I was unable to concentrate.

What's more-----

"Kuhah, it bounced again♪"

A battle plan whispered happily from behind and------

"Kokonoe--. Look at this dangerous angle Look to me♪"

After switching between the front and rear guard, she shook her butt and that caused me to lose my concentration.

(Damn it, she is definitely an enemy!!)

Luckily (?) Tachibana had a huge crack in her movements, and the match was taking favorable and unfavorable turns------

And it reached to the situation where if we take the remaining 1 point it would be our win but.

"Seii!"

Tachibana raised a spirited shout-------but on the contrary, she only tapped the ball and it dropped into our court.

This was the best chance for me and Tsukimi's attack.

[Kuh…….! I won't let you!!] [Idiot! Leave it to me--------]

"PuuWaah!?"

An impact was felt after we jumped in to hit the ball.

I crashed into Tsukimi who also came to receive the ball like me before rolling in on the beach.

"Where is the ball!?"

After I lifted my face when I stopped, I saw Miwa unable to reach the ball flying to her.

It seems she made a mistake in her estimations because of the wind flow.

"I did it!!"

"……..are you happy, <<Irregular>>?"

"Of course, I mean we won"

"In this posture?"

The moment I moved my conscious from Tachibana and Miwa's court to my current situation when I heard those words------I spurt out.

I was on top of Tsukimi and my hip's were touching her lower body…….

"Iyaaan♪ Kokonoe-kun is spinning his hips and pushing onto me♥"

Faster than I can say anything, Tsukimi performed a kanibasami-like move[3F 3] and locked my hips with her legs.

"Uwaaaaaa, just who is the one pushing me onto you-----!?"

Even though I was panicking at this stupid action, the real trouble happened after this.

"Kokonoe…….You shameless fool-------!!"

Tachibana ran away shouting.

"It's a misunderstanding----------!!"

Tsukimi performed a giant swing and threw me towards the sea before I chased after Tachibana.

After we finished playing beach volleyball, everyone enjoyed themselves with the Bento for which Miyabi woke up early to prepare it. The taste was delicious without any complaints, and Miyabi became shy when we told her our comments. Imari said * Not bad* and kept poking Miyabi's elbow while laughing.

Everyone commenced the standard watermelon splitting in the afternoon and after that, around the time we started passing the time happily like the whole morning----

I saw Miyabi faraway finding something while bending her body at the shallow waters and approached her.

"Oiii, Miyabi. What are you doing?"

"i-I am finding shells. I'm planning to bring back a shell that would serve as memories of here since we are here"

Miyabi showed the several shells she was holding.

It's true that the colorful shells were beautiful, and I agreed at the thought of using them as products for remembrance.

"Shell finding huh…….if that's the case, then can I join in?"

"Eh……? Bu-but……"

"It's more fun finding while talking right?"

"------!? I-i-it's fun talking to me……!?"

Splash splash splash……..maybe they slipped out if her hands; all of the shells Miyabi was holding fell into the sea.

"Haha. What are you doing, Miyabi"

I crouched down and gathered the shells Miyabi dropped while laughing.

"Ah…….To-tooru-kun. I'll pick them up myself……."

"It's okay it's okay. …….okay, that's all of them"

I took Miyabi's hand and placed the shells on top of them.

"Auu…….Uuau……."

"Hnn? What's wrong, Miya----"

Miyabi's face was completely red and was constantly opening and closing her mouth like a gold fish.

"Pyaaa----!?"

Banzai Miyabi raised both her hands together with a weird shout, and all of the shells she had on her hands scattered around.

"Auu…….Sorry, just when you picked them up for me……"

"It's my fault since I forgot about Miyabi's sensitivities, so don't worry about it"

"Uu……..Tha-that just now is well, true but……..this is different from that……and it's because it's Tooru-kun……"

(Because it's me……..?)

Half of it was mumbles but, it reached my ears.

I thought of the meaning of the words because it reached me.

(……There's no way right…….? Because, Miyabi is------)

Although I have one possibility in mind, I decided there was no way it's true and swung my head.

"Tooru-kun. Errr, I think it's weird for me to say this after scattering all the shells you picked up for me but……ca-can you join me to find shells again?"

"Aah, of course. Let's find lots"

"Unn……..!"

Miyabi nodded. Maybe it was left on her cheeks; her cheeks were slightly redder than usual.

After that, we started finding shells while talking.

Soon, around the time the sun was sinking, Imari came to call us back since it was almost evening.

I nodded, and after telling Miyabi we should head back to everyone------

Suddenly, I found a special shaped rock half-buried in the sand.

“Hey, Miyabi. This isn't a shell but, this-----“

Around the time the sky was turning slightly orange, Tachibana showed herself after changing back into her uniform in the cave. Julie and the others came behind her after that.

“Sorry for the wait, Kokonoe”

“……Ah-re, where’s Imari?”

I asked about the ponytail girl because she was the only one I couldn't find there-----

"Ahaha, sorry. Thanks for the wait"

As Imari came out of the cave with good timing, I decided to head back to the branch school.

"It was fun today. It would have been nice if Tora and Lilith had joined in too"

We talked about the members that did not join us while walking on the path leading to the mountain ridge.

"Fufuu, Tora looks like someone who prefers sleeping compared to playing. He is probably having fun on the rest day in his own way."

"But, it was a disappointment with Lilith-san though….."

Tora wasn't the only one we invited to take a dip in the sea with us.

We also called out to the gold girl whose hair color would look attractive with the blue sea.

But regretfully, Lilith swung her head.

Since she had accumulated fatigue, she decided to pass the time leisurely while having Sara massage her today.

However, she told me she would join depending on if I accept her condition or not.

"I wouldn't mind joining if Tooru would give me an oil massage you know?"

She complained when I immediately told her to take her time with Sara.

"Well we can't help it. We just have to invite them when we have the chance to play again-------"

And this occurred at this moment.

"Ahhh!!"

Imari stopped after making a sudden shout.

"What's wrong?"

"I was wondering if I had forgotten something just now and it looks like I left my pouch in the cave"

"Haha, how clumsy. No one would pick it up I think, but I think it's better to head back there immediately and get it"

"That's true, let's go with that……..Ah, oh no. it's my turn to prepare the ingredients for dinner in the hall. Uuuun, it looks like I would skip my work if I went to get my pouch……..
"

"If you run at full strength from here-----"

It will probably be enough to make a round trip, was what I was about to say and Imari made a loud shout again.

"Oh yeah! Neee, Miyabi. I apppooooologize for this but, can you go take my pouch for me? Please, I am counting on you!"

"Eh……? Errr……U-unn. Okay"

Pan I thought this when I watched her as she slapped her hands together in front of Miyabi, and Miyabi nodded.

(Miyabi just can't refuse huhh)

She might be weak with being pressed by someone, but I can't imagine this soft-hearted girl refusing someone's request.

Those characteristics are the good points of the girl named Miyabi.

"Thanks, Miyabi! I seriously owe you one! …….ahh but, it would probably be dangerous if one girl went there alone and something happened. That's no good. I'm worried"

I wonder why some part of it sounded strange just now.

"Then it's okay if Kokonoe-kun went along right?"

"Fuuee!?"

"That's true. Tooru is perfect for the job; I will be relieved if he goes with Miyabi"

"Fueeee!?"

Thinking she thought of a good idea, Miwa said my name and Imari agreed with her.

"You'll go right, Tooru"

I had no plans to refuse but, it's an irrefutable situation no matter how much I think about it.

"I get it. Alright then, let's go get it, Miyabi"

"Eh? Eh? Eh?"

"Just like what Imari says, it would be bad if something happened when you went alone. We will go together"

Since the conversation was advancing like that, she was probably confused about what was happening.

Pokan Imari lightly tapped Miyabi's back while she was staring at me with her mouth open blankly.

"FIGHT"

(It's just retrieving a forgotten object, why does she have to work hard for……..)

However, Miyabi made a shock expression and [U-un……..!] before replying back energetically for some reason.

[Tooru, Miyabi. I will head back too] [That's true. I'll go along too]

"STOOP! Tomoe it's your turn too right!"

"My turn? No, I-----"

Pachi pachi pachi pachi…….

Imari was blinking violently.

Just what's wrong with her?

"-----!! O-oh yeah! Hahaha, oh silly me……."

"Ju-Julie too right"

"Nai. You're wrong------"

"I asked you last night! See, you might have forgotten since you were dozing off!?"

"……It's true that I don't remember. I have no choice but to prioritize my role if I was asked for then"

I could hear several relieved sighs when Julie replied for some reason.

"……Everyone is so kind"

Ignoring Tsukimi's weird sentence, I headed back to the rocky area where the cave was located together with Miyabi.

"Ah…..it's over here, Tooru-kun"

We returned back to the cave and started looking for the pouch, before Miyabi found it.

(It's only natural to forget if it's placed in a place like this……..)

It was a hiding place in the rock and it's only natural to wonder why it's located in a place like that. We took a longer time than expected because of that but we would probably make it back to the branch school before the sun set.

Miyabi put the pouch into her straw bag and wore it on her shoulders before we walked out to the beach.

"Waa-ah……pretty……."

Miyabi muttered that when she saw the evening sun was near the water horizon and it was causing the sea to glitter.

The sun reflected on the sea surface and created a road of light on the sea.

"This…….is amazing……."

I agreed with Miyabi's opinion and stopped my legs to look.

The beach we were playing at during the afternoon had turned into a mystical scene as if it was from a picture.

But personally, this scenery could not even compare to photos in terms of captivating the heart.

The indescribable scenery created by Mother Nature was beautiful, but it looked somewhat heartrending.

"E-err hey, Tooru-kun. If it's okay with you, can we wait here for a while……I want to see the evening sun……."

"That's right. I guess it's alright if it's not that late. Oh well, let's look at this scenery together for a while"

"U-un……!"

After sitting down on the sand with Miyabi, I lost my ears to the sounds of the layers of waves.

The glittering gold color on the sea from the twilight looked even more magical and I started leaking a breath before I knew it.

"It's pretty huh, Tooru-kun"

"That's true. It's really pretty"

While there was sound in the background, I looked over to Miyabi and our eyes met.

In an instant, her eyes opened wide before she hugged her legs in panic and buried her face into her thighs-----

After a while, I got shy when she saw me after slightly lifting her face up.

My heart skipped a beat when I saw that smile and the tempo of my heart beat gradually increased.

I was looking at a beautiful scene that was not over exaggerating to say that it would remain in my memories for life, together with a girl even though we are just friends.

Together with a friendly, shy and cute girl.

"……Errr, Tooru-kun. What's wrong…….? I-it's kind of embarrassing……..if you stare at me like that……"

"------! So-sorry, I was day dreaming a bit……."

I avoid saying I got charmed by her and changed to conversation after turning my face to the sea.

"B-by the way. I have to thank Imari later. If she did not forgot her pouch, we probably wouldn't have seen this scenery"

"Ah…….E-err, about that. I think Imari wanted to show me this scenery……."

"So, it's on purpose?"

"Unn…….That's because, Imari has been living in this island for 3 months already. Then, I think she knows the time to see this pretty sun……."

I see, I agreed with her. But, if that is the case------

"If that was the case then, everyone should have come too. Well , it can't be helped since they have to prepare for dinner"

"U-un…….with everyone……that's true……."

It looks like Miyabi thought the same thing but, she dropped her shoulders in disappointment.

"Alright, we should head back now. Everyone will get worried if we take too long"

"U-un……."

Even though Miyabi made a regretful expression, she nodded.

We stood side by side again and started walking while looking at the magical scenery at the side.

"……..Ah, oh yeah"

"What's wrong, Tooru-kun?"

"Aah, there is something I forgot to do"

Zazan,*Zazan* I stared at the waves coming to the shore-----

I then measured the timing and *tatatata* ran on the beach.

The foot trail I made on the beach disappeared immediately after that.

“Haha like I thought, this was something I had to do if I came to the sea”

“……..”

Miyabi *Pokan* opened her mouth blankly at my actions and words----before laughing not long later.

“*Giggle*……..Tooru-kun you are like a child”

“I didn’t do that In front of everyone because I knew I would be told that”

It’s just too embarrassing doing something that childish in front of girls.

“Fufu. But, I am here right?”

“I thought I would be okay if I showed Miyabi……ahh, keep this a secret from the rest. I’ll probably get laughed at”

“If it’s me huh……..fufuun. Un, I’ll keep it a secret."

Miyabi giggled again.

“You swear?”

"It's okay; I will absolutely keep it a secret. Or what, Tooru-kun does not believe me?"

"I believe you. Tentatively though"

"…….Okay then, I can't expose it now since I also became an accomplice"

Before I could ask what does she meant, Miyabi placed her bag on the ground before jogging out.

She then made a trail of small footsteps on the sand.

Around the time I understood her meaning, the foot trail got washed away be the waves.

"It's true that this make you an accomplice……so, how is it?"

"It was fun, it was like I went back to being a kid……"

"Am I right"

Un Miyabi nodded before making a lively laugh.

This girl with a big flower blooming and the glittering ocean in the background does not look like someone that had been about to leave the academy cowardly by her own will.

I was glad I extended my hands to her on that day.

I probably would not be able to see this smile, If I didn't do so.

"Ah……."

After lifting up her luggage, Miyabi let out a soft voice.

It seems she fell on the sand when she was about to take the bag handle.

"Are you okay?"

"U-un. Sorry"

Several of her belongings scattered about on the sand because she fell down energetically.

Within them, there was a white stone with the color of the sunset engraved in it.

That was the stone I picked up and gave to Miyabi.

"It's a memorable object so please don't forget it like that okay?"

"I-I won't forget it. I absolutely won't……"

Miyabi made a wry smile when she received the pure-white special love (heart?) shape stone.

While still directing that wry smile to me, the wry smile turned into a sweet smile.

"Thank you for finding this stone for me, Tooru-kun"

"Haha, you already thanked me when I found it. Don't tell me that every time okay"

"Uun, but I still want to tell you…….not only this stone, Tooru-kun keeps giving me things like energy, or the feelings to tell me to work hard, etc-------that's why, I want to keep telling you this……"

Inside the sunset world, Miyabi started talking.

"Thank you for everything, Tooru-kun. Thank you lots and lots. And-----"

The words that continued after that, were supposed to be a soft mutter that was meant to be blocked by the sound of the waves.

But-----

Either this was lucky or unlucky-----

The sound of the waves stopped at that moment coincidentally.

"I love you"

Part 2

In the Kouryou academy branch school-----

The reason for its existence, was to be the saucer for the people that had dropped out from the <<Qualification Ceremony>>.

"……There is a 1 in a 1000 chance someone would have an <<Adapt>>. It really is a strange thing that he seriously thought I would throw them away because of one failure"

Tsukumo Sakuya made a weak smile after recalling back the conversation she had with Tooru a few days ago.

"Oh my, was it that different from your personal thoughts, Sakuya?"

Another girl was there combing her Yellow topaz hair while asking the question.

"Yes, that is right……..I don't mind throwing away losers"

Sakuya replied back her personal opinion to Lilith's question.

They might have the strength to be second-tier in the group, but they lost because they got unlucky and got paired up with a

first-rate strong opponent. That's why they thought they would win if they were put together with a different person-------What bullshit.

Those are words that could only be described as funny, by fools that have not thrown themselves into a survival war with their own whole lives bet on it.

No matter how much power a person owns, it would be meaningless if they don't win when the time calls for it.

"Everything ends when you die"

The results were all extreme logic and also irrational.

However------it is also true that they live in that kind of world.

But that was still Sakuya's personal opinion to the end, and the Dawn organization's objectives were a different story. A huge amount of funds is needed to continue the <<Lucifer>> research. In order for that, they need as many public maintenance team << Exceeds>> as possible for the source of those funds----even if they are not people Sakuya needs.

Of course, Sakuya does not think the existence of the branch school is completely worthless.

All of them are sacrifices.

They are sacrifices to plant confidence into the main school students that have survived in the <<Qualification Ceremony>>-----and also give them the readiness to aim for the top for the loser they won against with their own bare hands.

The reason why she allowed them to know of the existence of the branch school through the seaside school was also a type of mental testing for them.

It had been 3 months since they enrolled into Kouryou academy . During the period when they start getting a little relaxed after getting used to the daily training, they are made to meet up with the branch school and that will cause the students thoughts to change into two big flows.

They would either aim back at the top knowing that they might lose to the losers who had piled up additional training as branch school students...

Or they would become even more relaxed and lose their aspirations.

It is practically obvious that Sakuya wished for the former.

If she thought about the future, she would not need people that would relax at this level.

“By the way Lilith. This is about a few days ago but, what kind of intentions did you have when you said I wasn’t honest with myself?”

"It's more convenient to have Tooru think the chairman is actually a good child. Especially, that good boy"

Sakuya made a small shrug with her shoulders to the gold girl who winked at her.

"……Kokonoe Tooru sure is having it rough, to be loved by this double-faced woman"

"The living thing called woman has two-sides you know. More importantly, it is a fact that I do love him, so isn't that fine? Other than that, I move in order to achieve the things I have to do. In order to reach the <<Absolute Duo>>……it's just that"

While placing her hand on her chest as if she was singing in an opera, and spreading out her free hand, Lilith made an exaggerated posture and talked about the contents of her heart.

How much can she believe those words? Sakuya could not measure it as long as she does not say it out loud.

"Then now, a question from me"

The Lilith from a few moments ago was no longer here.

Her smile was gone and she narrowed her eyes; an expression that she does not usually show Tooru was there.

"Will it be tonight, if they are coming?"

"Oh my, did you notice?"

"When there is an idiot scattering its presence that much, there is no way I won't notice."

It was the 3rd day's morning after the start of the Seaside school that, Lilith felt someone's presence.

The presence would not get near the students and would only remain observing their movements; it was just stopped there far away, waiting for its existence to be perceived.

"It has been 2 months since the last incident……I even set the bait, thinking that <<Equipment Smith>> might start moving around to cause something……."

Sakuya made a faint smile while swinging her head to those let-down results.

"No close encounter huh……but, I don't think you need to act as bait by having a night walk even though you have Mikuni with you?"

It was every evening until today that they could feel the trespassers presence, and Sakuya took Mikuni along for a stroll about the island. Just like what Lilith said, she was acting as bait.

"It's either me or you. I just wanted to know which one of us they want……..The results were; they won't make a move at either one of us and I just know they are there"

"I wonder what kind of intentions they have for moving around "

"I don't care. I only hope that it's good sacrifices"

Unthinkable from a 10 year old girl, Sakuya made a cold smile.

The reason why that smile broke suddenly was because of the emergency signal sent from Kouryou academy main school.

"……call for reinforcement, why?"

The expression of the black-clothed girl turned dubious, when she received a report that they were receiving an attack by unidentified personnel with guns and were at a disadvantage.

The guards stationed there numbered 2 <<Exceed>>----<<IV>>, 10 number of <<III>>, and their power can rival an army battalion (Around 300 people). Adding in the 2nd and 3rd year students from the main school that had survived training, it was only natural for her to be dubious at this unnatural event of being called for reinforcement.

"-------I see, their goal is the research lab…….I understand, please withstand for 40 minutes. I will make Mikuni head there"

After cutting the transmission, Sakuya clenched her teeth.

(Their aim was not me, but the <<Lucifer>> data------I predicted that too but…….)

"They sure have sent quite a force there. I wonder if we should say that we got defeated here?"

Ignoring Lilith who was talking frivolously, Sakuya ordered Mikuni standing by beside her.

"……Mikuni, it's just like what you've heard. Head back to the main school and clean up the attackers"

"But Sakuya-sama. If an attack occurs here then-----"

It's only natural for Mikuni to be concerned. It's because it is a fact that there is a trespasser on the island.

"Judging by this situation, I can't send Rito over there. She might end up destroying the facilities there. That's why, I ordered you because you are an assassin type……..or what, are you saying you will not listen to my orders?"

"……..I would never do something such as that"

The gold girl then opened her mouth to Mikuni who was still concerned about her master.

"It's okay; you don't have to worry about it. I, the staff and also Tsukimi Rito are here. She is <<V>> right? Unless they sent over a powerful force, it will be impossible to bring us down"

"…….Understood. I am counting on you; please take care of Sakuya-sama"

"Of course"

Leaning on the wall, Lilith winked one eye back to him.

Mikuni turned on his heels and headed out of the room.

Lilith did not see his back off and moved her sights to the window.

(I did say that, but there is just this bad feeling I am getting……….)

The presence that was squirming around in this these past few days was still here.

But something different from that, an indescribable something was causing anxiousness in her chest.

Both Sakuya and Lilith were thinking without opening their mouths.

The room was wrapped in silence but-----

Soon, the knock that echoed in the room broke the silence.

Chapter 6 『Devour it

Part 1

Miyabi's face color changed immediately when she saw my shocked expression.

Even though she covered her mouth like, ***I've done it***-----

It was too late.

"You heard it……..?"

I did not answer. However, that silence became the answer.

She dropped her sights to the ground, and continued her words ; those words were either directed to me or to her own self.

"Ah, ahaha…….You heard……E-errr, I actually planned to say it with the wave sound to prevent you from hearing. After that , Tooru-kun would ask me what I said, and I would answer *Uun* nothing……then, I will tell myself to work harder than usual……..and……it would be nice if it's that……."

"Miyabi……."

Miyabi *Bikun* twitched her shoulders when I called her-----

She then slowly lifted her face.

"Errr-errr, Tooru-kun……..I want you to listen……..you might have heard this just now but……but even so, I want you to listen……..!"

Her face was so red that it could not get any redder but she continued staring straight at me-----

She told me what was in her heart.

"I love you……it might not have been long since we met but ……..but even so, I love you. Ever since Tooru-kun told me that you would be lonely if I left…….I was in love with you…….. that's why……..that's why, I really love Tooru-kun…..!!"

Even though the sound of the waves was echoing, that confession clearly reached me.

I-----was shocked, while at the same time I had somehow predicted this.

I thought of this possibility during the afternoon, when I went looking for shells with Miyabi.

At that time, I rejected that possibility since Miyabi was bad with the opposite sex.

However, when I recalled some events before now, there were some things I should have noticed.

Those ***some things*** happen during times she comes in contact with me. The image of her getting embarrassed when our hands

touch; that shy face when I nonchalantly told her to work hard and focus; those things started appearing in my mind.

All of it was forms of affection for me.

My heart changed from shock to confusion, and------to annoyance.

(How should I answer…….?)

My thoughts showed in my face------for an instant. It accidentally came out.

Not only was Miyabi uneasy, she was still looking at me so she did not miss that one instant.

It was already too late when I thought ***oh no***----

Tosaa the sound of sand moving when the straw bag fell again.

Miyabi's expression, changed to a tearful one in the blink of an eye-----

But she still tried her best to smile.

"Ah…….aha-ha…….As expected huh……..that's true……even if I told you I love you……..it's anno-ying……right…… So-sorry…….!"

"Miyabi…….!!"

Miyabi started running on the beach.

I could not chase after her even though I called her name.

“Miyabi……..”

While standing frozen on the evening beach, I looked at her back gradually turning smaller and muttered.

After her figure disappeared by the rocks, I gathered the stuff scattered from the bag on the ground----

I picked up the heart-shaped stone last.

The memory I had of Miyabi smiling when I found this stone and gave it to her this afternoon seemed like it was from a distant past.

I destroyed that smile.

“Damn…….!”

I clenched the stone.

Time won’t return even if I regret it.

It will never return.

Why did I get annoyed?

That’s because, I am an <<Avenger>>.

I entered Kouryou academy with a secret goal in my heart called revenge.

All of it was to gain <<Power>>.

In order to bring down my sister's killer with my <<Power>> which he judged was weak.

But, I gained back some of the days I lost 2 years ago in Kouryou academy.

Those warm, fun, and comfortable days.

But not everything that happened could be said to be good things.

I will gain <<Power>>, find out the meaning of the word, and accomplish my revenge------

Doubt was born inside me; I who lived with only those wishes from that day.

I don't want to let go of the warm days I regained.

However, I also can't let go of my revenge which is counter to those normal days.

Normal and abnormal days----my heart was wavering between those boundaries.

Those wavers moved and the doubt slowly changed to fear.

It changed to the fear of my everyday life filled with happy laughter and peace, one day turning to that summer day; my past filled with anger, hate, and sadness.

I must not forget.

I must not let it sink deep into my heart.

That’s because I am an <<Avenger>>.

(To have fallen……..for a guy like that…….)

How should I reply to the girl who told me her heart-felt thoughts while looking straight at me?

What do I think about Miyabi?

Although she is shy and quiet, it's fun talking to her. I would get energetic whenever I see her work hard and she looks quite charming.

More importantly, her shy smile is so cute it's bewitching.

There is no way I wouldn't be happy that Miyabi shows her affection to me.

It's also true that I have some affection for her.

But, but even so, I-----

I can’t throw away my revenge.

Around the time the sun had almost set, I returned back to the hall through the small path.

The main and branch school students were together in the hall getting started with dinner's preparations.

"Kokonoe, you came back"

A girl in prep work-----Tachibana jogged to me and asked me.

"Where's Miyabi?"

"Eh? Miyabi came back before-----don't tell me, she isn't back?"

"A-ahh……..this might be unlikely but, did she get lost?"

I thought it was still better if she got lost.

I distorted my expression and Tachibana's face color changed.

"…….did something happen?"

"Sorry, hold this for me! I'll go look for her!"

I pushed Miyabi's bag to Tachibana and tried to head back onto the road I just come through, but my hand got grabbed.

"Wait, Kokonoe! I'll go with you!!"

She might have guessed something when she saw my expression. Tachibana gave me a serious look.

At that moment, Imari and Miwa approached us because it seems they heard us shouting.

"What's the commotion, Tooru, Tomoe? Ah-re, where's Miyabi? -----you got separated……as expected, it's dangerous when the sun is down. Okay, we will go, both of you wait here"

"Noo, I will look for her no matter what you say"

Faster than me, Tachibana swung her head before continuing her words.

"I am Miyabi's <<Duo>>. She is the precious partner I chose. Imari, it's true that you are more informed about this island but, I can't do something like sitting down and waiting. That's why I am sorry, but I will go look for her! Let's go, Kokonoe!!"

After handing the bag to Miwa, Tachibana ran to the small path and I chased after her.

"Wait! Wait up…….! Arm ba……..! ……..!!"

Imari's panicked voice, got cut off immediately and could not be heard anymore.

Inside the forest in the ending twilight, Tachibana who was in front turned to me and asked.

"Kokonoe, where did you separate with Miyabi…….!?"

"…….probably at the hill road where we separated with you guys. Around there"

There was no road other than the mountain ridge from the beach. Which means, Miyabi did not take the usual road and should be somewhere around the ridge to the hall.

"I see. Then let's head to the mountain ridge first. From there, let's search the spots which Miyabi would most likely get lost in"

There are quite a number of hard divergences from the ridge to the branch school and she had most likely mistaken one for the road somewhere.

It's only natural since she was in a situation to lose her composure.

"You're not asking anything huh"

"…….. You lost her even though you two were together. I know something happened, but I don't know if it's something I can pry into"

Tachibana might know Miyabi's feelings.

No, thinking back carefully, Imari and Tachibana were the ones that created the circumstances to put me and Miyabi together. That 's why if anything happened, it was not strange if she predicted something.

"Sorry"

"You don't have to lower your head. More importantly, finding Miyabi now is our first priority"

Even though we looked down to the beach from the ridge as we were climbing down the slope, we did not see anyone.

Further up the beach-----the sun had sunk into the water horizon and the sky turned into dusk before we knew it.

On the opposite side----when we looked down from the caldera, we found out it was already quite dark.

Even if it was the afternoon, it would probably be impossible to find someone under the trees.

"We have to hurry. It'll be more dangerous at night……."

Even though she is an <<Exceed>> I don't think Miyabi in her current unstable state could make good decisions.

I heard that there are no big animals on the island, but it's dangerous to wander around in the dark.

"There are 3 divergences that look like they would be easy to mistake as a way back……then first, let's go on the animal trail. That looks like the path we used------Hnn?"

"What's wrong, Kokonoe? You're not going?"

I stopped Tachibana who was about to climb down the forest from the ridge.

“Wait. Just now, that’s…….a shadow right…….?”

“A shadow…….?”

Further up my finger------I saw a human-like shadow on the cliff thrusting out from the seaward side.

I felt as if I saw something move at the edge of my view for an instant but, the shadow was already gone by the time Tachibana looked there.

“Let’s try heading there?”

It might be Miyabi.

Guessing my unexpressed intentions, Tachibana nodded before we ran to the cliffs.

“Should be around here”

After a few minutes we reached the cliff, but there was no one there.

"I think we made a mistake coming here, but something like slipping down is……"

"Do-don't tell me……"

From the shock------a nasty picture crossed my mind and we headed to the tip of the cliff.

While watching our footsteps, we peeked down the cliff and could only see rocky areas down there.

Even though we are <<Exceed>>, it seems we won't be able to reach the sea unless we make a long jump.

"She probably moved"

Tachibana peeked from behind me, but I agreed with her.

"What should we do? Should we head back to where we were before?"

"No, I think it's better to look at the road around here leading to the branch building. Even if we head back, as long as there is a chance we missed her when we came here, I think it would be wasting our efforts"

If I think about the chance Miyabi might have been here just now, it's probably better to move according to what Tachibana said.

I swung my head down vertically, and was about to leave the cliff.

Jyari. A giant shadow that appeared together with the sound of small stones getting stepped on was blocking our way.

Of course, it wasn't Miyabi.

A familiar and yet unfamiliar giant male was standing there glaring at me with wickedness in his eyes.

"Long time no see, damn brat. I was hoping to see you……."

"Y-You are…….!!"

This guy, who was making a vulgar smile, was unmistakably the guy that intruded in the <<Survive>>. Of course, along with the face, he had a characteristic battle suit and assault rifle in his hands; the memories of 2 months ago vividly returned.

"…….Kokonoe. is this man perhaps……."

"Aah, it's that guy"

I nodded to Tachibana without moving my sights from the man. Even though it was the first time she met this man, she probably guessed who it was since she heard it from me and Miyabi.

"Why are you here…….!?"

"My mission, you should know that if you use your head a little . But, my role is already done"

"-----!! Did you do something to Lilith!?"

"Keh, no. this time, it's a different target than that Bristol rampaging horse……wait, you're going to die now anyway so, it's not your problem"

Perori the man brought out his tongue and licked his lips in a foul manner.

"Seriously, that's one heck of a bad guy line from movies. Since you talked that much, how about telling me what the content of the mission is"

Tachibana whispered to me who was speaking bitterly.

"Kokonoe……."

"I know. We have to get through somehow. We are at a complete disadvantage if this goes on"

It's probably impossible to avoid battle since he appeared specifically in front of me.

We are at the edge of a cliff. Meaning, we are at a disadvantage before things even start.

We will probably be in serious trouble if we don't at least get rid of the terrain issue.

"Be grateful, you damn brat. I came to this southern island a few hours back purposely just to beat the shit out of you"

"I'm not happy at all to be popular with you old man……."

The man was not showing any weakness even though we were talking. The gun was normally just aimed at us.

His hatred of me was probably boiling, but it seems he was calm in battle aspects. He probably lost to me before because he made light of me during our last confrontation.

"Your face is still annoying as usual. But, what are you going to do in this situation? Destroy the ground again? I think it's a nice experiment to see if the <<Exceed>> would die after hitting the rocks from a few meters above the ground! Gyaahahaha!!"

His disgusting laugh echoed throughout the area.

"Answer me this. Were you the one here just now"

"……Idiot. It's not my duty to answer you"

He made a mocking expression.

But, since his reaction was slow by an instant, I understood that the shadow I saw before was not this man.

That shadow was Miyabi like I thought huh.

(I guess its good luck that Miyabi did not meet up with this guy …….)

I changed my frame of mind here. I'm still worried about Miyabi, but it will be dangerous if I don't focus on this man.

"Tachibana. I will charge in. it's the same basic strategy we did during the time with Lilith. But, it's impossible to block all the assault rifle's bullet so-----"

"Understood. I just have to be your support right"

Even if I didn't finish my sentence, she immediately guessed the rest of it. I once again thought Tachibana is one trustworthy comrade.

"Well then……time for you to die, damn brat"

The man released killing intent and distorted his mouth; he might have imagined our deaths.

His trigger finger moved-----

Gagagagagagaga!! Together with ear piercing gunshots, the bullets were released with killing intent.

""<<Blaze>>!!""

GiKikii!! Tachibana's <<Chain>> turned into a tornado and averted the bullet's path, although some bullets got through, most of them were blocked by my <<Shield>>.

"Whattt!?"

It's normal for the man to be shocked.

That's because most of the bullets got put down with only 2 <<Blaze>>.

We might get some injuries but, it's far off from critical hits.

"Now!!"

I aimed at his discomposure, and lowered my body while preparing my <<Shield>> before charging at him.

The man is probably a veteran soldier as expected. He immediately regained his composure, and prepared his gun-----but , there was an attack obstructing him from pulling the trigger. The <<Chain>>'s metal drip hit the guys hand and made him drop the gun.

"Y-you little bitch……!!"

His anger burst and the moment I jumped into the man's chest area-----

"Idiot, I purposely lured you here!"

"-----!!"

The fist I thought connected got dodged, and it hit the air.

"***Judging by the previous match, my physical abilities are now higher because I became << $^{Level\ 3}$ III >>***-----that's what you probably thought right, you damn brat……!!"

It probably occurred the same time he dodged. There was a knife being held in the man's hand.

A blade slashed----from below to upwards.

Even though It was a close dodge, I got punched when my balance collapsed.

"I already know you got stronger. That's because, I have been looking at you brats these past few days in detail!! But, we are also done adjusting the <<Unit>>!! Hyahahahaha!!"

I received more punches when I was wobbly and the knife came falling as a finale. Even though I immediately prepared my << Shield>> and blocked it, I immediately took an uppercut to my jaw .

"Kokonoe!!"

As if to change places with me who got blown to the edge of the cliff, Tachibana stood in front. Tachibana and the man exchanged attacks while defending in close combat. The <<Chain>> would avert the knife, the sickle would cut the air, and she would ward off his giant punches with Juuhou[3G 1]. His giant body floated up for an instant------and got slammed to the ground.

But----

"…….Too naïve!!"

Disregarding the fact he got slammed hard to the ground, the man stood up immediately and at the same time released a kick with his log-like legs. Tachibana got blown away even though she guarded it.

"That was a mistake. I never would have thought you would retaliate that way……"

Tachibana landed without falling down but, the arm she blocked the kick with was limping downwards.

"Kuh, Tachibana……uu……."

Even though I tried to head out to stop Tachibana from fighting with her injuries, my view shook and I fell to my knees.

The jaw attack shook my head vertically and that caused a cerebral concussion.

"Kukuh……nice look you got there. Stay quiet like that. I'll beat the shit out of you while giving you a pain you have never imagined before."

He licked the knife and made a disgusting laugh.

"…….This is a crisis huh"

Judging by Tachibana's tone, I know she was feeling disadvantageous.

She probably calmly analyzed the situation by my condition and the wound on her chest.

"You can try running you know? But, that's if you can do it"

There was no place to run. The man made a scornful smile at your completely disadvantage situation.

"……..okay then, I'll do that"

"Whaaa!?"

Faster than his words, Tachibana turned her heels around and ran to me.

"……..Kuh, damn it!!"

The man looked surprised but, he immediately picked up his gun after guessing Tachibana's intentions.

"Kokonoe, we are jumping!!"

Running towards me, Tachibana did not slow down and hugged my body----

Inside the bullet storm, we reached the edge of the cliff and------

We jumped into the sea.

"-----E……Konoe…..Wake up, Kokonoe……."

There was the sound of a helicopter rotor passing through.

I could hear a weak call mixed with that sound.

(Wh-where is this……..? What was I……..I was searching for for Miyabi and……)

Inside my cloudy conscious, I wondered why I was lying down on a place like this.

When I came to, I was laying on top of a rock.

"-----! Oh yeah, that guy! And Tachibana…….Kuh…….!?"

I felt pain on my head after I raised my upper body when my memories became vivid, and I felt a damp sensation when I touched my head.

"Sorry…….I injured you……."

Someone talked to me, and I noticed Tachibana lying down on the rock nearby for the first time.

"This is just a scratch, don't worry about it. It's a little sad I lost my parka"

We fell a few meters down to the sea after jumping from the cliff.

We rode on the wild waves and it seems I lost my parka when I hit the rock several times; I was currently not wearing anything on my upper body.

"Haha, I did something bad to you……"

When I say thanks in a joking manner, Tachibana made a weak smile.

"It's thanks to Tachibana I am alive like this. I am really thankful"

Even if we continued fighting just now, we would probably be tormented by that guy since I could not move because of a concussion and Tachibana could only use one hand because of the injury.

That was why; I think Tachibana's choice to retreat immediately was a good one.

"More importantly, Tachibana are you okay?"

Tachibana probably lost a lot of blood in the sea.

She looked like she was in pain, but showed a firm smile.

"Fufu, of course. I am somehow-----Fuu, Guh…..!!"

Half-way in her words, Tachibana's expression distorted into pain.

She got a palpation after she said no; it seems the shoulder she got hit by the man got dislocated and there were some spots hurting because she slammed into some rocks.

"Your ankle has the worst injury. I think it's broken. I can fix it if I have cloth but……..."

I am worried about Miyabi but, as long as there is no way to tell what that man would do next, we have to get back to the branch school as fast as possible.

That's why I have to perform emergency treatment for her fast but, I don't have the cloth needed to fix her leg.

"Kokonoe, I am okay……leave me and-----"

"Don't be stupid. How can I leave a girl alone out here"

It seems he might be injured too, but there was a possibility that guy might still be around looking for us.

Also, I can't leave Tachibana out here.

"…….Tha-thank you, Kokonoe……..."

"It's a normal thing to do so don't thank me"

More importantly I need cloth or something close to it.

I looked around to look for something that got washed ashore so I can use and-------

"……..Ko-Kokonoe. Errr, if it's a substitute for the cloth…….. You can use my…..…"

"Eh? I use what from you?"

Since the word got erased by the sound of the waves, I could not hear what I should use at all.

When I looked at Tachibana's face, she was making an expression as if she was having issue trying to say something.

"Li-like I said…….. St-st-strip off my l-leotard and use it……"

"I see, your leotard. I get it!"

Its elasticity and length was enough. I had no objections using it as a bandage substitute.

"…….strip your----leotard?"

I regained my senses here.

"Me?"

"I-I have no choice right! I can only use one arm even if I want to do it myself, and my body hurts whenever I move……."

Thinking about the injuries on her shoulder and body, it's true that her words are correct but-----

"T-that's why, I want you to strip off my……leotard with…… your hands……."

She looked dazed half-way through her words.

Maybe Tachibana was clear on what she was suggesting for me to do right now.

"Thi-this is a treatment done because of this emergency situation. You should know that too……..!"

"A-ahh……."

But even so--------*Gulp*.

Although I have no time to be thinking weird stuff now.

Even I know Tachibana does not mean it in any weird way when she brought up the suggestion.

But even so, Tachibana's suggestion was enough to slam me into a vortex of nervousness.

I could clearly see her cheeks blushing in the dusk.

Of course, it goes for me too.

"F-faster…….will you strip it off for me…….? I-if possible, do it gently……."

"That's what I'm planning but……tell me if it hurts okay…….?"

"I-I get it……."

"Okay then……I'm stripping it off"

I made up my mind and slowly put my hands into her skirt.

Tachibana looked away from me and stayed silent but-----

"hnn……."

She twitched her shoulders when I placed my fingers on her leotard's waistband.

After I pulled away my fingers in surprise, Tachibana looked at me meekly and apologized.

"So-sorry. Continue……."

I nodded and placed my hands on the waistband again before starting to pull it down slowly.

"Can you lift your hips a little higher?"

"Hnn……Hah, nnu……li-like this……..?"

I made her slightly lift her hips but, it hurts my heart to see her breath roughly.

But since I had no choice of stopping here, I started pulling down the leotard again----and half-way, my finger got caught on something.

"What? Strings……?"

"---------!! Wa-wait, Kokonoe! Pl-please don't pull any further, that's my……under……."

Her voice turned softer as time goes even though she was behaving flustered.

(My under……?)

Judging by this situation, I tried thinking the rest of the words and----

"Ah……"

I let out my voice when something comes to mind. When I did that, Tachibana saw me noticing and looked downwards in embarrassment.

"Uaa, E-errr. Ah-no, Ta-Tachibana is like an adult so, I think those are good, un!"

"Wh-what is good, you sh-sh-shameless fool! Don't imagine anything weird, limit those perverted thoughts!"

"Uu……..Sorry……."

Even though I was trying to help, I got scolded back.

(My mouth is the one causing disaster huh…….)

While reflecting on my mistake, I vow to pull her leotard down silently from now on------I planned to vow but.

“Fuu……Hnn, ah……..Nuuuuu…….A-ahh, Haaan ……Kokonoe, your fingers are, haaa……..”

“P-please stop with the weird sounds……”

As expected, I just had to tell her after she leaked puffing breath .

“Don’t call it weird……..! I can’t help it since your fingers have been touching my thighs and its ticklish……..I am just bad with tickles……!”

Either it was anger or troubled, Tachibana was showing one of those expressions.

“So-sorry……Errr, I am continuing”

While feeling awkward, I started pulling down her leotard again.

“Hnn, Haaa……..a,Hnkuh……..Fuaa-a-a-aaaaa……”

In the end, I could not help but touch her legs with my fingers and although Tachibana pressed her mouth with her hands to resist it, she could not aviod those charming breaths until the end.

Thanks to that, I felt as if I couldn't look at Tachibana's face straight on for a while.

"-----Okay. done with the fix. Let's hurry to the branch school"

Not long later, the emergency treatment to fix her legs and other injuries was done so I carried Tachibana.

"This is the second time I've carried Tachibana like this. Please don't go wild like last time?"

"Carry……..!? Do-don't say something weird!! Uu, ouch ouch……."

"I-I don't mean it that way so stop rampaging!! Anyway, let's go. It will be wobbly but bear with it"

"U-umu……Kokonoe……err, Thanks……."

"Don't worry about it. Okay, let's hurry!"

I started running, with full power towards the branch school.

However------

After a few steps forward, I could not help but to stop my legs.

That's because I found a familiar parka washed ashore at the rocky area.

I wouldn't have had to use her leotard.

“”……””

“How should I say this……..sorry”

“Don’t say anything, Kokonoe……..”

We crossed the mountain ridge and after we left the forest path I continued running toward the branch school.

It was clear that there was a weird air wrapping the island.

Even though it was night already, I could hear the birds making noises.

Something was happening.

Although I didn’t know what it was, I continued running while an uneasy feeling was in my body-----

“Iyaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaa!!”

I stopped my leg at the sudden scream that sliced through the darkness.

"Kokonoe, that's……..!!"

We both immediately realized who the owner of that scream was.

"Miyabi……!!"

Part 2

Reversing the time to when Tooru and Tomoe were at the mountain ridge.

"Excuse me"

A staff member brought the ponytail girl into the office Sakuya and Lilith were in.

"What's wrong?"

Since there was an emergency at the main school, Sakuya was irritated without it being shown in her face.

However, the anger was mixed into her voice and both people that entered the room got overwhelmed for an instant.

(Ahaha……it's hard to think that you're 10 years old)

Even though Imari thought that of the girl in front of her, she immediately composed her feelings and proceeded with her business.

"I am sorry. One student from the main school got lost in the forest and has not came back yet. I apologize but can I borrow a terminal to use?"

When Tooru and Tomoe ran out, she tried telling them about the armband signal device but her voice did not reach them. Imari did not chase after them and told the problem to a staff member immediately; that's why she went there to receive permission to borrow the terminal which acts as a receiver.

"……..understood. We will prepare it"

Although Sakuya was thinking ***why of all times*** in her mind, she changed her mood and ordered the staff.

Left there, Imari felt the uncomfortable feeling in the room.

The owner and the previous visitors did not open their mouths and the air there was heavy.

Regardless of the fact that she holds the highest authority in the academy, Sakuya was still a young 10 year old genius.

Another was a girl wearing a butler outfit.

The last person was the <<Rifle>> user and has another name called <<Exception>>.

Imari did not have many chances to talk with Sakuya so she had no idea what she's like.

Even though Sara talks a little, she has seen her swear her loyalty to the gold girl.

Lilith was the only one there that she had spent any time with these past few days and somewhat understood about.

Although she is a little selfish and follows her own pace, she basically has a frankly sociable personality and because of that, she has a good relationship with the other students. She's a beauty and although she knows it, she would not boast about it. She probably was confident about herself. She was so relaxed that it was unthinkable she was the same age as Imari.

And one more thing------She does not hide her affections for Tooru at all, regardless of the surroundings.

That all was Imari's observation of the 3 people she can see.

(I wonder if they were talking about something serious……..?)

Something had happened judging by their atmosphere, but Imari would never have come to the conclusion that the main school was being attacked.

Within the silence, Imari glanced towards the gold girl.

Because Imari would often come in contact with Tooru, she would talk to Lilith too; and although she likes her personality, it was hard to open her mouth there as long as the others wouldn't do so.

Lilith finally broke the silence there.

"…….Imari, who got lost?"

"Ah……..Err, it's Miyabi. Tooru and Tomoe are looking for her now"

"I see. That's so Tooru"

Imari felt the room atmosphere turned a little lighter when she saw her smiling outside.

Immediately, the staff member that went out of the room came back with the terminal in his hands.

"Thank you very much. If you would excuse-----"

It was too early to say ***excuse me*** and bow her head down.

"--------!!"

Gattann. Lilith suddenly ran to the window and looked out with a stern expression.

Imari decided to cancel her thoughts for leaving the room temporarily when she saw her expression and quietly looked at the situation there.

"……we got hit. I never would have thought they would come using HALO……."

High Altitude Low Opening[3G 2]----AKA, HALO.

A descending method which consists of jumping out of the aircraft flying at a height of 10000 meters, and opening the parachute after reaching 300 meters above ground. Infiltrating in a distance that even Lilith could not perceive their presence, it seems the island was swallowed into chaos.

On the other hand, many of the students preparing for dinner in the hall noticed the abnormal situation when they heard the sound of parachutes opening. Even though everyone pointed at the night sky and saw something falling down, only a few of the students there realized that it was a HALO.

This would be included in later curriculum but at the current point, since this was a technique not taught to them yet, it was only normal for them to say they didn't know.

However, it was different for the teachers and staff who had graduated from Kouryou academy. They immediately noticed it was a HALO and judged that an unscheduled abnormal situation completely irrelevant to the beach school training was happening.

Intruders started landing one after another. They all had the same mechanical designed battle suits on, helmets covering their face leaving only the mouth and were holding assault rifles.

Even though the students couldn't understand what was going on, none of them moved and they continued staring at the intruders until----- Bullets were fired along with muzzle flashes.

Screams appeared one after another-----and what's more, those were from comrades they trained together with every day; the students fell into a panic.

Everyone was running around screaming and many of them ran away without any shame or honor. The box filled with ingredients got kicked down; the campfire used for cooking was trampled, and they ran away pathetically thinking of their own safety first. Even though they received <<Exceed>> training, they were still trainees. There were only a handful of people there with the will to fight.

A small teenager within that handful----Tora held his <<Katar> > and was glaring at the men.

"It's you bastards…….!! Fuun, I will now repay my previous debts!!"

Within sparks of flames, Tora, his <<Duo>> Tatsu and the teachers confronted them.

He jumped into the attacker's chest area and made it a melee fight after slashing with his blade. Since the enemy's comrades were in chaos, the attackers stopped using their guns to avoid shooting their own people and close combat became the main focus in the battle.

Tora's fighting makes it hard to think he is a trainee.

(……..mu? That's-------)

Within the chaotic battle, Tora noticed the girl standing frozen at the edge of the hall with a scared expression----it was Miyabi.

He also saw one of the guys in battle suits approaching her.

"I-iyaaaaaaaaaaaaaa!!"

Tora started running when he saw Miyabi running into the forest with the man chasing after her.

"…….Fuun, she sure loves to cause trouble"

Leaving a tsk, Tora disappeared into the dark forest too.

The team sent by <<Equipment Smith>> was trampling over the hall with overwhelming power.

Even though the teachers and staff were putting up a good fight , the situation gradually turned disadvantageous.

The students thought they would be killed.

Under the situation where most of the students were starting to fall into despair from fear------

There was only one person there with a smile.

“Kuhah, Kuhahah…….! Oi oi! That sure was flashy, huh oi! I didn’t hear that these visitors were coming. I didn’t hear it but……it’s damn interesting!!”

Wearing a rabbit hairband, a teacher with her youthful visage remaining was there laughing.

Her blood was boiling at the battle that was starting.

“There are a lot of things I want to say like, what the hell are you doing to our brats, or how dare you do that to Doryo but oh well. Anyways, I get to go serious after such a long time……!!”

The rabbit-ear girl-----Tsukimi Rito swung the <<Fang (Tebutje) sword>> in her hands.

One guy in a battle suit nearby jumped out of her range and dodged it-----was what he tried to do.

The blade separated and suddenly extended its range.

The attacker could not avoid Rito’s attack and his blood splashed all over.

Rito's <<Blaze>> was not a <<Fang (Tebutje) sword>>, but rather it was a << Snake (Whip blade) >>. 2/3 of the sword's body connected with a metal steel line separated into several blades and was used as a whip-----this was one of the things she did not show Tooru and the others during their fight.

"Kuhahahaha! Ora ora ora, bring it onn!!"

The insane rabbit was hopping under the moonlight.

One attacker after another fell each time she swung her sword.

"This woman is on a whole different level, be careful! Unlike the brats, you can kill her!"

Ordered by the leader, the attackers scattered and started shooting at Rito after taking some distance.

Although Rito was a << V (Level 5) >> which is a <<High Level>>, not only was she outnumbered by the attackers with powers incomparable to normal people-----(What's more they are even stronger compared to 2 months ago), they also have guns at their disposal.

Even though she knows she won't lose, it was true that the damage would increase if this goes on.

While dodging the bullets and hitting them down with the << Snake (Whip blade) >>, Rito clicked her tongue.

"Seriously, how annoying…….but, Mr damn glasses not appearing even though I am causing this chaos would mean-----it's okay ***if I use it*** right?"

Having passed her time in the hall, Rito has no idea Mikuni had already left the island and was heading to the attack occurring in the main school.

But, since there were no orders given for this kind of situation, she decided that it was okay and----shouted.

"Devour-------<<Ouroboros>>!!"

Rito's <<Blaze>> which is called a destruction type released its real power by the <<Words that carried strength>>.

A change-----

The attackers were overwhelmed at that appearance and loosened their triggers.

They doubted reality and were wondering if the scene they were looking at was an illusion.

The << Snake (Whip blade) >> Rito was holding was only 1/3 of the sword's actual body.

Then, what happened to the remaining 2/3? ------The answer is on top of Rito's head.

Further up the hand she was holding up to the sky, the blades were forming a circle and rotating as if it was like a snake biting its own tail. After they saw the ring-formed blades floating 3 meters off the ground, the veteran solders (Attackers) felt a chilling sensation at their backs-------

Rito made a wicked smile.

"Well then, time to get crazy with the moon rabbit!!"

After getting trampled one-sidedly, the Kouryou academy swiftly moved to counterattack because of Rito's <<Blaze>>.

The blades moved continuously slashed and slammed at the attackers one after another by Rito's commands.

"Amazing…… I didn't know <<Blaze>> had that kind of << Power>>……."

Imari was the one surprised when she saw the battle in the hall from the office. Lilith stopped her saying that it's better not to head outside and she remained there looking at the situation outside the room.

If Imari was in the hall, she would not know if she could remain this calm.

With a window frame between her and the scene, she could be somewhat remain calm while looking at the scene in front of her.

“I knew this from the data but, it’s still amazing”

“The low accuracy is a flaw in the crystal though”

Lilith mumbled,and Sakuya responded to her comments.

However, it was true that there was no more trustworthy existence than her in this current situation.

But-------even after conditions of <<Ouroboros>>’s weakness, Rito’s battle-loving trait, and the violent firefight piled up on top of one another, one more new danger occurred.

Dozunn…….!! A sound and tremor of a small explosion echoed from the corridor.

“Wh-who are you all!!”

Immediately, shouts from the staff standing-by outside the room turned to sound of blades clashing.

“……..Ya-re Ya-re. Both the main school and outside were diversions huh”

In the main school attack, they made a situation there to make the strongest ally - Mikuni leave the island-----

In the branch school attack, they pulled the attention of the remaining strong ally - Rito outside away from them ------

With a small time delay, the intruders moved to their true target .

Everything was on top of the enemy's palm.

"Sakuya, you head underground. The staff there can operate the boat right? Sakuya please follow them. Imari, bring Sara with you to the outside. I'm sorry, but you need use the window to exit"

"I understand. I leave the rest to you"

Sakuya took a glance at the gold girl who gave out the orders, before leaving one sentence and disappearing into another entrance with a staff member. There were stairs behind the door and it was connected to an emergency evacuation pathway.

"What do you mean by leave the rest to you……what are you going to do, Lilith?"

"I am obviously going to hold them off here"

As long as they have no clue as to what the attackers real intentions were, Lilith's top priority was to let Sakuya get away.

If she was the target, then she thought that everything would end if she turns the tables here.

Sara was surprised at Lilith who made a big swing with her blonde (Yellow Topaz) hair while making a very natural smile.

"Ojou-sama!? No way, if ojou-sama is going to stay, I am-----"

Lilith faced to the ponytail girl from her perplexed butler.

"Imari. It's going to get annoying for you but please. Also------ please tell the situation to Tooru. You have the terminal so you should able to find him in this situation"

"I-I understand!"

Even if she brings Tooru here, the battle situation here would not change much. Everyone would say that, if they saw the collapsed staff members who incidentally were << III (Level 3) >> like Tooru.

---but, Lilith was different. She knows Tooru would do something about this.

Imari could feel her thoughts and made a firm nod.

"I'll find Tooru and bring him back"

"I'll be expecting that. I think the preparation for teatime would be over if you take your time though"

After seeing Lilith make a wink with one eye to her, Imari made a small smile and carried Sara out the window before running into the chaos outside.

"Okay then……"

After seeing them off, Lilith slowly turned around.

In front of the gold girl, the door opened and-----

A teenager with arrow-like eyes was standing there with his subordinates.

"Sorry but, you're not getting through"

"Fufu, well looks who we have here……..it's unexpected that you would be the one taking the role of stopping us, Miss Bristol. I am greatly honored to see you. My name is <<K>>----Pleased to meet you"

Lilith frowned at the unpleasant feeling coming from the polite but rude attitude.

"Okay, Miss Bristol. I apologize after just meeting you but, we have to bring the <<Blaze Diabolica>> to <<Equipment smith>>-dono. We did not receive any orders to invite you this time, so please move away from there; it will be a great help if you make this quick……."

A gunshot echoed and a hole was formed in the floor.

"I won't say it twice. I already told you, you're not getting through"

"This is a disappointment but, we can't just agree with you here and go back"

"Then prepare yourself and come at me. I already charged up my energy to protect that cute girl today"

After making a wink, Lilith pointed her gun to the gang.

"I guess I have no choice"

Offer declined-------but, the teenager never thought the offer would be accepted in the first place anyway.

Matching <<K>>'s words, the 3 men standing behind him stepped out.

Under the watchful gaze of those arrow-like eyes, a 3 vs 1 battle started.

Since the room was not that big, Lilith chose to use the <<Rifle> > like a club. It's disadvantageous for her to handle several opponents like that but even so, she would sometimes shoot bullets and cleverly take advantage of the walls and office tables to prevent the 3 of them from attacking at the same time.

"How magnificent. You sure have the stuff to back up your title <<Exception>> as expected"

The enemy-<<K>> expressed his admiration at the sight of her magnificent footwork and the blocking of his blade with the << Rifle>>.

"------nonetheless, we don't have the time to dawdle around like this."

<<K>>'s priority was to execute his mission.

That's why it was obviously necessary to stop wasting time with Lilith, and prevent Sakuya from running away-------so he had prepared a gun in order to finish this quickly.

It was the gun that caused that loud explosion that could be heard throuout the office-----a grenade launcher.

A moment before he pulled the trigger, Lilith noticed <<K>>'s posture and got shocked.

"uhhh!! That isn't funny!!"

Immediately, the door blasted open together with a loud sound and the building shook.

Chapter 7 『We Are Jumping!

Part 1

I'm scared---- I'm scared I'm scared I'm scared I'm scared I'm scared I'm scared I'm scared I'm scared I'm scared I'm scared.

Fear completely filled the heart of Miyabi who ran into the dark forest.

She felt she was getting chased from behind.

She felt the man in the battle suit was chasing her.

She turned around several times, but she could only see the forest shrouded in dark.

However, Miyabi looked like she was just being chased by the darkness.

(Why! Why are those people here! I don't want this, I don't want this anymore……!!)

Turning the clock back to earlier in the evening-----

After running away from Tooru, Miyabi was at the cliff before she knew it.

Porori Tears were falling in front of the sunset that was too beautiful to describe.

Once she started crying, the only thing left was for the tears to spill out-------so she just sat at that place and allowed her tears to flow.

In her mind's eye, the expression Tooru had made just before floated about.

He became troubled because she told him her feelings.

Miyabi knew what Tooru was thinking about himself by his expression.

It would probably be a lie if she said she didn't expect anything somewhere in her heart.

Tooru was always kind.

Even though she knows he's kind to everyone.

The unforgettable scene left only painful memories in Miyabi’s heart.

Miyabi's feelings calmed down a bit when the sun was half way down, and she decided to head back to the branch school.

Even though Tooru had seen Miyabi standing here from far away at that moment, they missed her by a few minutes.

Miyabi had left the cliff, climbed down the ridge and walked through the small path in the forest with absolutely no clue that Tooru and Tomoe were going around looking for her.

She had a reluctant feeling about going back and thought that she had made everyone worried, but still moved her legs forward even though each step was heavy.

(What should I say…….)

Imari told her to work hard, but Miyabi knew she never had any intention of telling her to confess.

Make a memory only the two of them have and close the distance between them.

Even though everyone cooperated to make a chance for her to gradually close the distance from him, everything became useless with one foolish sentence to satisfy herself.

She didn't want to go back. But she probably has to go back.

She didn't want to report to them. But she probably has to report to them.

Those heavy contradictions pulled her heart but once Miyabi got back to the hall, what waited for her was the sight of her classmate running amok in fear and the men in battle suits.

“Auuu……..!!”

Miyabi stumbled on something and fell down.

Even if she didn’t fall now, she would probably trip on a dent in the floor or a tree root sooner or later if she continued running through the dark forest frightened to death like that. Rather, it’s probably a miracle that she could run this far without falling down .

She tried to stand up thinking she had to run away.

But, her legs were trembling and that made her fall down again.

Not only her legs; her whole body was trembling.

She somehow managed to raise her body, but sitting down was all she could do, and it looked like she wouldn’t be standing for a while.

She grazed her knees when she first fell, but she did not have the time to feel the pain now.

*Hyuu**Hyuu* she couldn't even notice that this unfamiliar sound was her own body hyperventilating due to her fear.

No shadows moved at all, although she turned around and stared at the darkness with scared eyes.

(Am I safe……?)

Just when she thought that in terror...

“Kukuku, I never would have thought I would find that damn brat’s friend out here……”

Miyabi’s whole body got goosebumps.

That voice that was the source of her fear was something she could not ever forget.

When she moved her sights to the direction of the voice----- in front while trembling, a nightmare was standing there.

“------Uuh! Iyaaaaaaaaaaaaaah!!”

“Shut up!!”

“uh, Kahah…….!!”

Her scream was forcefully stopped. The man in a battle suit was choking Miyabi on the neck.

“Stop with the shouting already!! I am pissed off because I let your man run away, and the wound is aching so much that I am going crazy!!”

“Hii……!”

Being a victim to his anger, Miyabi lost her voice.

Seeing her in such a state, the man smiled happily before slightly relaxing the grip on her neck.

"Kuku……oh yeah. I'll have you take responsibility for your man's misconduct. I will slam this ache into you, slam the shit into you!! Over, and over and over again!! But rejoice! I won't kill you! Thank me, and report to that damn brat while crying!! Hyaahahahaha!!"

Despair took over Miyabi's heart.

She knows no help would probably come even if she cried and shouted in this forest.

(Sa……save me…….Tooru-kun…….)

Her body will now become tainted and a wound that could never disappear will be carved into her heart.

Miyabi shut down her consciousness in order to run away from that fear.

A moment before she fainted, she felt she heard a shout and-----

She immediately regained her senses when her body suddenly felt a big swing.

After a moment of the feeling of floating in the air, Miyabi's body was being carried by someone.

She shrunk her body thinking that it was his dirty fangs touching her body but------something was off.

The arm holding her was very warm and gentle.

(Who is it……..?)

Slowly opening her eyelids, the person who appeared in Miyabi eyes----was Tooru.

Part 2

Tachibana told me to go on ahead, so I left her and entered the forest when I heard a voice coming from ahead on the forest path; I saw a man a in battle suit holding Miyabi by the neck while making a loud laugh.

The next instant, my mind turned completely blank------and I jumped forward to punch the man before I knew it.

After seeing the man fly a few meters away, I immediately turned to Miyabi.

Just like a puppet with its strings cut off, I caught her lifeless falling body and called out to her several times.

"Miyabi, Miyabi……! Are you okay, Miyabi!!"

"Too-ru……kun……..?"

Her consciousness was probably still cloudy. With her eyes opened Miyabi said my name by parts.

(Thank god……!)

Even though I was close to hugging her, I returned to my senses when I heard a sound coming from behind.

"Miyabi wait for me for a bit"

I lightly tapped Miyabi's shoulder while she was still blank and stood up.

"Just when I thought you were running around like a rat, you appear and disturb me from slamming her in, you damn brat…….
"

"…….Shut up"

"What did you say!? Bastard, now that you appeared nonchalantly, this time I will------"

"I told you to shut up, you piece of shit! Don't talk anymore! Stop breathing out that stinky breath! How dare you hurt this girl!!
"

My words were really pointed at me.

That's because I was the one who hurt Miyabi before this man.

Anger surged in me. The anger towards this man was going wild in my heart.

“SHUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUT UUUUUUUUP!!”

The man lost to his emotions and pulled out his knife before jumping at me.

However, that went for me too------no, I charged in with an even darker emotion.

Forgetting to manifest my <<Blaze>> I jumped at the man again .

The knife grazed my shoulder and my fist crushed his cheekbones at the same time.

Even though the man was staggering, he did not give in and-------I continued slamming him mercilessly with a fist storm.

Several punches, several more punches. There were no techniques done, just plain violence from anger.

“Gah, Haah……..! Ra-Ramn, brat, Gaah!!”

He dropped to the ground, but the man stood up again staggering-----

He jumped towards the assault rifle he dropped when I first punched him.

It was too late when I thought ***oh shit***, the man prepared the gun and--------it was pointed at Miyabi.

"Ku-kuku……..don't move okay, you know what will happen if you do right…….!!"

There were a few meter distance between us. However, the man would probably pull the trigger mercilessly if I made even the slightest of movements. This was a complete reversal.

"Kuh……!"

I couldn't move. The man was convinced of his absolute superiority by my reaction and prepared his knife.

In an instant, the sound of cold air in the night sliced through the heated battle and-----

The <<Chain>> coiled itself around the arm holding the gun and the man was pulled backwards.

"Whaaa!?"

The knife he threw pierced itself into tree far away from the target which was me.

When the man looked behind-----to the <<Chain user>>, her eyes were shaking in anger for her precious friend. Tachibana resisted her wounds and managed to reach us.

"You dirt!! Don't lay your hands on my friends!!"

"Shut up bitch! I'll wreck you too----"

"……..I told you to shut up"

The man looked towards me again. But I was already in his chest area.

I was there pulling my fist back like I was shooting an arrow.

I will release the power-----with that black angry emotion in it.

My fist crushed the man in the battle suit and he was blown away.

"Sorry for the wait, Miyabi. It's alright now"

"I'm sorry I made you wait Miyabi"

After we ran over to Miyabi, her eyes moistened when she got relieved.

"To-Too-kun, Tomoe-chan……I was, scared…….I thought it was useless but, both of you, came……..an-d……sorry, Tooru-kun, I am very sorry……."

She might not know what she was saying already.

Miyabi just let her tears flow.

I didn'nt get hurt at all from the fight-----

"Miyabi, you don't have to apologize. I ------"

"A……a-aah……"

Miyabi's expression changed half-way through my words.

From surprise to fear. That pale face was directed behind me----

"GURUAAAAAA!!"

His eyes no longer had any sanity in them and they were glaring at me.

The hand he swung up was holding the knife, and the blade was making a pale glow.

I can't dodge this. This blade will easily slice through the girl in front of me if I dodge it.

"Miyabi!!"

I hug Miyabi to cover her in an instant.

But------the knife was not swung down no matter how long it took.

What's going on, I slowly turned behind and-----

"……Gah, ah……..a……..a……."

The body of the man in the battle suit shook as if it was stuck in a frozen position, holding up the knife------

I saw the tip of the sharp <<Katar>> piercing through his chest.

“Fuun, looks like I made it in time”

After the man's huge body collapsed producing a tremor, our friend was standing behind him.

“Tora…….!!”

I confirmed the man had completely fainted this time, and I asked Tora why he was here and what was happening at the branch school.

"------So the situation is worse than what we had imagined huh ……"

I learned that there was an attack by people in battle suits like the man collapsed in front of me.

I lost my voice when I heard that there were many injured people and in the worst case scenario there might be some deaths too.

"I saw one of them chase after Hotaka. And that's the reason why I followed them."

Half-way through some of the attackers managed to reach him, and after he defeated all of them he chased after Miyabi again and reached this spot.

"I turned up late because there was a little bit of trouble"

"There's no problem since we're saved. Anyway, thanks a lot for moving for Miyabi. If you hadn't followed her then……"

I cut my words and looked at Miyabi whose shoulders were being hugged by Tachibana.

She had been released from her fear and started crying again.

"I don't need your thanks. I just thought you would feel bad if anything happened to this girl even if she was somewhere beyond your reach"

That's exactly true.

That was why I was seriously thankful to my precious friend-Tora for the actions he took.

"Anyway let's head back to the branch school. They need as much battle potential as possible now"

"Wait, Kokonoe. I really want to do that too, but I can't take Miyabi there now……"

"That's true. It's better to hide Miyabi somewhere safe. Also for Tachibana, it's dangerous for you to follow us with those injuries"

"Thi-this level of injuries to me is……!"

"Don't ask for the impossible. You're in such a bad condition that even moving is tough for you right now"

Even though it was to save us, her injuries had gotten even worse because she forced herself just now.

"Both of us will go so Tachibana, you take Miyabi and hide somewhere-----"

"……it's okay if they can hide, but what are you going to do if this guy's comrades find them? Forget fighting, both Tachibana and Hotaka don't have the power to even resist"

It's just as Tora says.

I can't just leave the two of them here, but I can't bring them along either; now this is a problem.

"Then, I'll go alone-----"

"Don't be stupid. How can I let you go into that situation alone"

Judging by Tora's tone, it seems he was not budging at all.

My name was called out at that moment and 2----no, 3 girls ran over to us. The last girl was a female butler being carried by a ponytail girl.

"Julie, Imari…….and Sara too! You guys are amazing to know that we were here"

They were a little out of breath, and I was surprised at the 3 of them that had run over.

That's because we were currently at a place away from both the promenade and forest path.

"We used this. You know, the thing I used during the <<Blaze practice>> on the first day……."

The terminal Imari showed me after our battle during the day we reached the island was again in her hands.

"……..I am sorry, but about my Ojou-sama's situation"

"Ah, that's right. Sorry"

"Did something happen to Lilith…….?"

Even though her tone wasn't that different, I could feel a weird change from Sara who could not hide the anxiousness of her expression.

"Actually------"

Imari's talk gave the same shock----no, an even stronger shock compared to what Tora just told me.

Another enemy team appeared in the office, and Lilith stayed there alone to let the chairman escape.

"We got attacked by the enemy half-way too but Julie saved us"

Julie said ***it's okay don't worry about it*** when Imari thanked her.

"I'm worried about Lilith. Let's head back quickly. Sara, you stay here with Tachibana and the rest. Also-----Imari too. Can you protect the 3 of them for me?"

"…….Sorry, Tooru. I can't listen to that. I promised Lilith I would head back immediately. I might not be that helpful in battle, but I want to go back no matter what"

A strong will was in her eyes when Imari stared at me------

An unexpected person supported her opinion; it was Tora.

"……I will stay. Even if Nagakura stays here, she won't be able to handle the situation if an opponent of this guy's level shows up. It pisses me off, but it's better to have Julie head to the branch school battle potential wise"

"Tora……."

"Hurry up and go. You're going to save that girl right?"

"……sorry, Tora. Leave it to me"

"Tora, I apologize too. And, thank you"

Tora turned away when he heard Imari's words.

"It's just picking the right people for the right jobs……more importantly, all of you stay alive. Understand?"

"Ah……of course, I promise"

"The three of you-----please help my Ojou-sama"

The last, Sara, who hates me like a snake, lowered her head as we headed out after I replied ***I definitely will***.

"Julie, Imari. Let's go!!"

[Ya---!] [Uun!!]

Four of them remained there and the rest of us ran toward the branch school.

When we got near the branch school, I could hear gunshots, screams, shouts, trembles and so on from there.

We got through the forest not long after and-----

I gasped when I saw a giant ring blade in the battle at the hall.

"What's that……?"

"Apparently that's Tsukimi's <<Blaze>>. You know, the one where you can release its full power at <<IV>>"

Running beside me, Imari gave a quick explanation.

(If she has that amazing <<Power>>, why didn't she use it during our fight?)

Although I had some questions, I postponed it for later and charged into the western building.

We went through the door that had lost its shape due to explosives or something and ran up the stairs.

"Lilith!!"

We went inside the room and found the gold girl covered with injuries.

Her skin and clothes were stained with soot-like dirt and the 6 holes on the wall caused by some kind of explosion similar to the building entrance was probably not unrelated.

3 men in battle suits attacked Lilith, but one of them faced towards us when they saw us.

Faster than he could prepare his rifle, Julie jumped to him and swung down her sword. However the enemy could not be taken lightly since he blocked the sword flash.

"Are you alright Lilith!"

"Sorry. Preparations for tea time haven't started yet"

Although Lilith was talking nonchalantly with a wry smile, she was a little different than usual.

Maybe it was because she was handling two opponents or maybe she was tired from her injuries.

(……her expression huh)

As if she was irritated from uneasiness, it was totally a far cry from her usual leisurely attitude.

"I'll help out too, Lilith"

"It's okay. More importantly go inside"

"Tooru, the chairman went inside there"

She pointed towards the broken wall that had probably had a door there and Imari gave a simple explanation.

"That's the case. So, this might be pathetic coming from the << Exception>> but, I let one go. That's why; we don't have the time to handle these guys"

Lilith's judgment was probably correct.

Judging by her impatient and fast tone, there was no time for questions and answers.

But, is it okay to leave this spot to Lilith who is exhausted now.

"Tooru. I will stay!"

"Imari……!?"

"I think it's better if I stay here. If not, I might not be able to protect my promise"

After looking at Lilith's condition and those 3 enemies, Imari made her decision and prepared her <<Sword>>.

"Understood. I leave this to you, Imari"

"Right back at you. If Tooru and Julie don't come back safe then I won't be protecting my promise at all! Julie, I will handle that man!"

As soon she shouted, Imari slashed towards the man in a battle suit that Julie was handling before.

"Ya----, I understand. I will protect Tooru"

"You heard her, Tooru"

Imari giggled while the sound of a sword clashing with the man echoed.

"I will protect Julie too……..."

"……..Tooru, that vow should belong to your future partner which is me. Well, I guess I will let it go this time since I have no choice"

Lilith slightly regained her composure when she said that.

"Okay then, I leave that guy to you, Imari!"

"Yes, Lilith! ……but, taking this guy alone is too much for me so, it would be a lifesaver if you finish it fast!"

Both the blonde (Yellow Topaz) hair and ponytail were fluttered.

Julie and I considered that aside and ran towards the big hole ahead.

"I'm counting on you! Please protect that girl-Sakuya, Tooru!! Julie I will count on you too, but tentatively though!!"

[Aah, I will definitely protect her!] [Ja---!]

We accepted Lilith's request while running through.

After we advanced into the big hole that had been opened up when the wall was destroyed, there were stairs leading underground. While paying attention to the wreckage, a dim road revealed itself. Although the underground road had lamps lighted up with a few meters interval between them, the length of the whole road was unknown to us.

We silently ran on the road leading straight ahead.

Our footsteps were the only sounds echoing there.

It was probably rarely used until today. After advancing through the slightly dusty air for a while------the underground road suddenly reached its end.

There was a big open place when we got through the road, and it seems this was a cave with a strong smell of salt floating around since it was connected to the sea.

When we peeked down from our foothold, we found out we were standing on a place constructed 30 meters (the height of a 10 story building) from the sea and there were iron stairs along the wall leading downwards. There was a pier further down the stairs and a 20 meter long pleasure boat was anchored there.

(--------! That's……!!)

The moment I noticed the people I believed to be the staff members collapsed on the pier, the sound of the engine echoed throughout the cave.

The boat at the pier started being moved by some unknown individual.

Who was moving the boat? There was only one conclusion I could reach after assessing the situation.

At the same time, I knew we wouldn't make it if we descended the stairs.

"Julie, we're jumping!"

"Ja---!"

There was no hesitation. We jumped through the fence and let our bodies dance in the air.

ByuuGooo the air hit my cheeks and-----

We reached the deck while making a loud sound and the pleasure boat shook greatly. Although there was a dent in the iron deck, the boat continued exiting the cave without stopping.

"Yoo, we meet again"

The teenage Caucasian boy thought to be moving the boat came to the deck and after exchanging glances with his arrow-like eyes, those were the only words that I could naturally come up with.

"Yeh, we meet again as expected"

The teenager made a small smile.

We will meet again------

Whether or not 2 months was a long time or short a time, the prediction I had made at that time now became reality.

The ship slowly moved forward within this tense situation.

Assessing from the fact of no one on the bridge, the boat was probably on autopilot.

“Where is the chairman?”

Standing beside me, Julie asked the teenager while pointing the tip of her <<Saber>> at him.

“She is not injured at all, so do not worry. She is currently taking a rest inside the cabin”

The teenager’s tone was polite, but a somewhat hypocritical courtesy could be felt within and it brought forth unpleasantness.

“Even so, it was reckless to jump down from that height”

“That’s okay because the target was big”

“Even if you are an <<Exceed>>, you should be somewhat hesitant to do something like that”

“You will take the chairman away if we hesitate even a little”

By the sudden decision I made, the girl who jumped off without any signs of hesitation answered.

"Amazing decision skills……..however we are about to go out to sea."

Just like the teenager's words, the boat passed through the cave and exit under the starry skies.

Judging by the position of the shining moon above the sky and the giant island silhouette, I found out that we were southeast of the island.

"…….Can I hear your names?"

"Kokonoe Tooru. She is my <<Duo>>, Julie=Sigtuna"

"I am called <<K>>. It's Kokonoe Tooru right? I predicted I would meet you soon----in the near future, but I never would have thought I would do so at the end of the <<Selection>>"

"<<Selection>>? What's that. For what reason did you attack us ?"

"At the very least, it is a plan unrelated to you now"

"I beleive I am quite related though"

"What, you won't be related anymore if you die here"

"What did you say……..!"

Kuku <<K>> laughed as if he was looking down on us and that made my feelings a little irritated.

"…….Tooru"

Kui my sleeve was pulled and I regained my composure.

"Sorry. I have to calm down"

"Ja---"

Since I managed to relax a bit thanks to Julie, I started talking to <<K>> while thinking about what we should do now.

(The ideal choice is to beat this guy up and save the chairman)

I can't guarantee we can achieve that. That's why; I decided to try another way.

I casually operated the armband while acting as if I was checking my arms condition and sent out a rescue signal.

I then released the clasp before hiding it in my hand and dropped it on the deck.

Even if we fall into the sea, it will be possible to find the boat's location with this.

(……Getting thrown out off the ship means the end but, I can't think about that)

Another problem would be, does the academy side have the leisure to pick up the rescue signal.

The possibility that the branch school is fighting now is high, and if that's the case they probably don't have the leisure to send a rescue here. The reason why I still sent the signal out was because I recalled back Imari's words which were ***use everything you have in your hand.***

"Well then, it might be weird to say this but, I am very merciful-----I have a very sweet personality for a soldier……..5 seconds, I will give you that much time to think. It's the time I give for you two to jump into the sea to run away"

"Then I don't need even 1 second. I can't refuse the request I got from Lilith. Also, I will protect the people within my hands' reach ……That's why-----I will protect the chairman!!"

"Houu. The girl there-----Julie=Sigtuna was it? How about your answer?"

"It's tentative but, I got requested by that person(Lilith)……..and I also reject it because I can't swim"

"Fufu, your partner is good with jokes I see"

(……it's the truth though)

It seems <<K>> took Julie's answer as a joke and clapped his hands.

"Okay then------let's begin. The game where the winner would be given the princess and our lives would be bet on the toss of the coin……..of course the winner would be me"

The owner of those arrow-like eyes made a different kind of smile.

It was an evil, distorted and ice cold smile.

"Captain of the <<Riberus>>, <<K>>-----will now exterminate the obstacles"

[Kuh……..!?] [That's…….!!]

Killing intent blew towards us like a sudden gust.

I prepared myself in reflex from that strong intent.

There was probably no gap between our physiques and ages, but the pressure <<K>> was giving off was so strong it made sweat flow down my back.

"Okay, let's go"

Ka *Ka* *Ka*…….<<K>> walked on the deck and slowly closed the gap.

Even though a misapprehension of the battle hadn't start almost got to me, there was no way I can let it happen. Those arrow-like eyes did not look away from us, and one step after another, he slowly came closer.

I suspected it might be a trap or something, by looking at his casual state but-----

"…….Tooru"

"Aah. Let's go, Julie!"

His intention for coming closer was unknown to me but, it's convenient to us who are experts at close and short distance combats. We matched our breathing and filled in the gap at the same time.

We aimed at his stomach with me releasing my fist from the right while Julie taking the left-------but, <<K>> moved his body only by a bit and dodged the <<Saber>> before easily blocking my fist with his palm.

"That is quite some power you have there. It's at the same level with my subordinate wearing the <<Unit>>, about there I guess. I never would have thought this would come from flesh even though it was genetically altered……I now understand the reason why <<Equipment Smith>>-dono is fixated on the << Exceed>>"

While blocking my fist, <<K>> said something incomprehensible. During that time, I relaxed the power before pushing in again but, he was not budging at all.

Julie swung her blade again during that moment. Even though he dodged the horizontally swung blade by lowering his head, Julie kept that momentum and used one sword to cut upwards. He

then lifted his face he lowered this time. The moment he made a big swing reaction with his upper body, I relaxed my fist and performed a locking move, but-----

Buun the kick missed. <<K>> used the momentum he got when he lifted his head and jump backwards.

"He is quite a skilled fighter"

Since the boat floating on the waves was constantly swaying, it was hard to maintain the center of gravity. However, judging by how <<K>> outdone our attacks without any trouble from that display of attack and defense; I could feel that was only a fraction of his true strength.

"We are going to continue attacking, Julie. It's disadvantage to keep blocking in this small deck"

"Ja---!"

We charged in again. I went in front this time and released a hook from a distance-----but, this was a feint. I shifted to bending my body when I missed, and made a spinning side sweep with my leg. However, <<K>> slightly crouched down to dodge that too.

"Not bad! But, both my attacks are feints!"

The moment <<K>> moved to dodge the sidekick, the silver girl jumped over my head while my body stance was low because I was bending down. Julie then performed a splendid drop kick with the momentum and slammed it to <<K>>'s face.

"…….how disappointing. It might be fast but, it's regretfully light"

Julie's kick was blocked by <<K>>'s crossed hand guards, and the damage could not get through.

"But----you stopped moving!"

After Julie jumped away from the kick's recoil, I switched in and gave him a hit.

When I slammed his stomach with an elbow strike plus the momentum of me standing up, <<K>> who took a clean hit, got blown away before his back got slammed towards the handrails.

Although the iron fence served its purpose to prevent people from falling off the deck but, its shape was greatly distorted from the impact.

However-----

"Fufu that is one fine combination"

My expression stiffened when I see <<K>> stand up without breaking his small smile.

"……I thought you took a clean hit though you know?"

I should have the power to destroy a concrete wall now that I am << Level 3 III >>.

I never would have thought he would stand up that easily as if there was no damage done to him at all.

"It is somewhat painful"

"Haha……..somewhat huh"

<<K>> showed a smile while wiping his stomach.

"The damage was probably quite powerful if it was my subordinates but, it's not as strong to make them faint though. However, the <<Unit>> I am wearing now is actually an exclusive model for me. Output, armor, and other statuses are higher than the normal ones so, I only received a slight damage from the attack just now"

"I see. So the reason why you people transcended humans is because it thanks to those battle suits. No wonder all of you were wearing strange outfits"

"That is correct. Just like you <<Exceed>> who transcended humans with the <<Lucifer>>, we transcended humans with this <<Unit>>"

"I am kind of happy there was a hit, though it's not much"

Although I made a sarcastic smile to him, I was confirming the situation in my mind.

(If he isn't bluffing then, it wasn't that effective. He might took some damage but, it's far from a critical hit…….so that means----)

I moved my consciousness to the girl standing beside me with her <<Double>> prepared. No matter how much the <<Unit>> is resistant to impacts, it should be unable to block slash attacks. That is probably true judging by the fact he dodged Julie's <<Saber>> when she first swung it down.

The basic strategy I thought from that point, was to have Julie finish him as I become her support.

(……I guess I should find a chance behind him and slam <<Thunder god's strike>> there)

"Julie. Sorry but----"

"I understand. Tooru's will focus in support and use that when you find a chance"

As expected from the partner that stood beside me several times shoulder by shoulder.

She has already figured out my intentions.

"It's really reassuring to have Julie around huh"

"Nai. That's what I want to say to Tooru"

"…….now that you have finish discussing, can I begin now ? However, I will be moving my hands now"

<<K>> pulled out two knives from the circular storage on his hips, and prepared it with both his hands.

"Let's go, <<K>>!!"

I made an eye signal to Julie-------and charged in for the 3rd time.

However this time was different, I changed to a left stance with my right fist and leg brought forward.

Compared to the original right stance with my left arm and leg brought forward, my defense will become softer because I cannot use my <<Shield>> for attacks coming from the right. What's more , I can't use the <<Thunder god's strike>> which requires twisting my body.

Mjolnir

"Hoou, what are you trying to do after changing your stance?"

"Like this!"

In an instant, I lowered my arm after hardening its muscle------- and my right fist placed around my hip, sliced into the air.

"------!!"

A slightly surprised expression appeared on <<K>>'s face who was making a very leisurely expression until now.

Even though he dodged the fist aimed at his face, it scratched his hair.

"I see, so this is the reason why you made a left stance"

This was a new move I made by the experience I gained, during the final battle we had with Lilith to scatter her rose last time.

The stillness before the button falling, and the move after it fell-----

That battle like the ones shown in western movie was the hint.

The new move was similar to a flicker jabs in boxing and the fist prepared at a low angle thrust straight at the opponent in an instant. Taking <<Thunder god's strike (Mjolnir)>>, the move of releasing all the charged power in one punch as the base, I arranged it to a move stressed in rapid fire. Since the motion was close to none while the power was reduced, it looks as if I was performing quick shots and I gave this move a name.

"Eat this, bullet punch!!"

"……..Let's name it << Thunder speed roar Hrungnir >>, Tooru"

Different from the first one, <<K>> could only strengthen his guard to my fast fists fired in rapid succession. Even though it was stressed in rapid fire, it does have the same power as a right straight worthy to have <<Thunder god's strike (Mjolnir)>> as its base move .

Julie slashed down at that moment but, <<K>> jumped behind immediately.

Julie's charge attack was wild and------<<K>> blocked off the all-side slash attack with the knives in both his hands. Instead of stopping it, he diverted the power away.

But, Julie's attack was not so sloppy to allow him to divert everything away.

Kiin! The knife got repelled off his hands together with a high-pitched sound. Even though Julie took this good opportunity to slash down at him, it was a trap invitation. He purposely threw the knife away.

The moment <<K>> dodged the swung down sword, he aimed for her petrified moment that didn't even take 0.1 second and grabbed Julie's wrist before throwing her-----no, slamming her to the deck.

"Hah…….!!"

Julie's face distorted from the impact.

<<K>> lifted his leg to step on her but-----

"I won't let you!!"

It got prevented when I slammed into him.

Taking the chance when <<K>> staggered a bit, Julie rolled away but----

"Nice follow-up…….but, you carelessly closed in the gaps too much!"

Dozuuu,*Gah*…….!! His knee strike thrust towards my stomach and made me stagger before he blew me away with a punch.

"Fufu, nice work surviving through that. However, I wonder how long would that last"

Luckily-----no, it was on purpose. When the charge attack stopped, <<K>> showed a leisure smile when he looked at us standing up. 2 knives flew towards me when I fell down after getting blown away. I blocked one with my <<Shield>> and somehow managed to dodge the other one by twisting my body but, my sleeve was cut open.

"Are you okay, Julie?"

"Ja--, no, problem……"

Her words do not match her state completely at all. Julie's shoulder was going up and down while her breathing was in complete disarray.

"Please don't force yourself. That's because you have to perform the final blow!"

Faster than finishing my words, I headed to <<K>> waiting for us.

It was not a simple charge but rather I moved in as if I was drawing a lightning.

I blocked the knife thrust towards me with my <<Shield>> and got closer to him.

The knife <<K>> was holding in both his hands were freely trying to aim for my life. It was probably impossible for me to get close to him if I was handling him alone, when I saw his amazing knife technique. However, I was not alone. My partner-Julie was constantly making diversions for me.

Unlike me, Julie moved into <<K>>'s blind spot with footwork diversions. Of course, because <<K>> could not afford to ignore her movements too, he focused on chancing his standing position to always have Julie's movement in his view and because of that, he could not concentrate on the fight he was having with me.

It was not a simple attack but rather it was one of our combination plays.

"Seriously, it's annoying"

"That's praise for me. I'll gratefully accept that"

I obstructed the knife path with my <<Shield>> and tore the air with my fist, while Julie repeatedly perform the hit and away. But even so, he has yet to receive a decisive hit.

(Damn it, this guy is amazingly good in defense……!)

I gradually understood <<K>>'s strength as we fought.

It goes without saying for his knife techniques and <<Unit>> defense but anyway, his defense is amazing.

He skillfully wards off my attacks and Julie's slashes before dodging. Because the power was diverted away to the air, chances would appear after our attacks, and he would swing his knife aimed towards that chance.

Since he wouldn't make any big swings with his attack, no chances were formed after <<K>>'s attack.

He was different from any enemies we faced before. His style, which involves not initiating an attack but still gaining the upper hand, was a battle style which could be made possible because of his confidence in his absolute defense.

(Strong! But, I can't lose!!)

"Again with that flicker huh……however, overusing a single move is something not worth for praise you know"

While paying attention on the knives position, the moment I released the << Thunder speed roar Hrungnir >>.

A sharp pain ran through my body and after warm blood splashed out from my forehand, I scattered to the deck.

"Guuu!!"

The << Thunder speed roar Hrungnir >> has been broken.

He swung his blade matching with the punch I released and----- a wound appeared in my forehand.

"No way……!"

I got surprised that he matched a counter to my fist moving at high speed which was hard for the eye to capture.

"No matter how amazing the move is, it's not something you should repeatedly show out. Especially for ***a move that has a weakness*** in it. You are slightly lowering your fist the moment you release it"

"Guuh……..Damn it!"

I could not restrain my discomposure when he found my weakness in that short battle and whats more with detailed specification.

Because of that, I made a simple attack.

<<K>> easily dodged the big swing attack I made----before stabbing the knife into my thighs.

“uuuuuh!! Gaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaah!!”

“Tooru!!”

When <<K>> turned around, he pulled out the knife from my thighs to ward off Julie’s charge attack and at the same time, he used the leg supporting his body as an axle and-----landed one kick at her knees.

Mikiri together with such a dull sound, the silver girl’s facial expression distorted.

“Chances will be born when your calmness is broken-----it’s hard to understand why you would join the battle when you don't even know something that simple”

<<K>> mercilessly kicked up to Julie’s stomach when she was staggering. Julie was then made to suspend mid-air with the leg he kicked before he slammed her down to the deck immediately.

“Kuh, Fuu……!!”

The deck dented from the impact and she dropped the << Double>> she manifested with her <<Soul>>.

The knife was mercilessly swung down at her there.

“Ju-Lie……!!”

Giikiii!! I covered Julie and blocked the blade with the << Shield>>.

“Fufu, it’s amazing you can move with that leg”

“I promised to protect Julie……!!”

“You are just going to make me tired if you keep spouting out stuff you can’t do”

I got blown away with a kick at my stomach the same time he said that.

<<K>> walked over to the downed me and-----stepped onto my chest.

Mishi……..*mishi*, *mishii*, *Mikii*……!!

“UGuh…….
AaaAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAaaaaAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAA
!!”

My bones started to scream from the strong pressure and it made me shout.

"Nice voice there……..well then, please say that one more time. What are you going to do to her?"

While making a sadistic smile, <<K>> increased the pressure of his stepping leg.

Even though I tried pushing his leg away, his legs didn't move at all as if it was a rock.

An shout of anguish, a complete mismatch with the starry skies echoed throughout the area.

"*Cough*…….Gah, Haa……!!"

Blood was mixed into my shout but right when my conscious was starting to fade----

The silver girl stood up.

"Get away from…….Tooru!!"

Even though she was staggering and dragging her leg, Julie still swing her sword.

For me. In order to protect me.

Even though a simple swing will cause great pain to her.

However the power was low because of her condition and she stumbled back after her slash got deflected.

"Please stay still. I will send you to same place as him soon"

"I won't let you……! I will protect Tooru!!"

"Protecting each other. What a wonderful bond. Hahahaha"

Julie was moving her body with a will strong as steel. She repeatedly performed breath-taking combination attacks with a speed unthinkable that she was having great pain on her knees.

"To think you still have some moves left…….okay, I'll play with you too. Until that small body reaches its limit that is!"

<<K>> pulled out the remaining 2 knifes from his circular storage and retaliated the silver girl.

Julie became the gust and moved around the small deck with high-speed movements. Her Silver hair fluttered like wings and was being illuminated by the moon.

Silver Blonde

"Houu, you still can move faster huh. It's amazing how you can move with that broken knee"

"I won't let anyone…….die in front of me!! I won't let anyone become like my papa……..!! That's why I will protect Tooru!! I-I, vowed that!! That's why I will definitely protect him!! In order for that----I will defeat you!!"

It was at that moment.

Kiiiiiiiiiiiiiiiiiiiii--------!!

Suddenly, a noise that makes one want to cover the ear by reflex , echoed throughout the ship.

It was being produced from Julie.

Julie accelerated together with that sound.

It was a speed even me as her <<Duo>> has never seen before. " Ju-Julie…….!?"

<<K>>'s leisure expression disappeared when he saw Julie swinging her blade with crazy speed.

"-----Muu, I never thought you could still move faster…….!?"

He became anxious and could not ward off the attacks as he pleased anymore; blocking the sword from reaching his body was all he could do.

"Guhh, no way…….impossible, this much……..!!"

<<K>>'s expression distorted from the shock.

"Haa,ah…….! Ah…….! Haaa! Kuh, Haa……!!"

Julie's expression also distorted from the pain.

But even so, she continued accelerating.

Under the moonlight, Julie's sword speed and quick body movements caused her to become a silver flash.

"Aaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaahh!!"

The silver girl roared and----

Her presence changed.

Her presence changed to a silver wolf that just had its chains released.

"Yaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaa!!"

The slash of gales turned into a storm of swords-----

The storm of swords turned into a windstorm of sword bashes-----

And finally, the windstorm of sword bashes turned to a hurricane of storm blades.

"Impossible, impossible, Guh, uu……Gugahh, Guaaaaaaaaaaaaaahhh!!"

He got swallowed into the slash storm and his knives got destroyed; his iron hard defense got pierced through-----

Having been blown away, <<K>> shattered the boat's forward glass and slammed into the captain seat.

"Haaa…….! Haaa….! uh, Haa……..!"

--Iiiiinn……..

The sound stopped the same time Julie fell to her knees.

(What the hell was that…….)

"-----!! Ju-Julie are you okay!?"

Those movements clearly crossing her own limits made Julie's body paid a big price.

"Tooru, too…….are, you, okay……..?"

Even though she was so exhausted that she would collapse if not for the swords support, Julie was still worried about me. I became happy but my chest hurt at the same time; it was a very complex feeling.

---but, however, those feelings vanished in an instant.

"……Ya-re ya-re. To think you hid that much <<Power>> ……..it-it's unexpected as expected you know……. however, it looks like moving itself will be a trouble for you judging by that state……."

A wobbly shadow stood behind Julie.

<<K>> grabbed Julie's neck from the back and lifted her up like that.

"----------uuh!!"

While raising a sound that does not sound like a voice, Julie's expression was filled with pain.

"Okay then, should I kill you by twisting your neck or choke you to death-------"

<<K>> pondered for a moment, before coming out with a cruel conclusion.

"I guess I'll throw you into the sea. You can't swim right? Even if you could swim, you will probably drown with your current stamina anyway. On top of that, there is nothing uglier than a drowned corpse. It's also quite fun to make a beauty like you into something obscene"

"--------! S-stop------!!"

Julie's body was ruthlessly thrown into the night sea.

I extended my hands and jumped.

"Julie, extend your hands! Just like that time!! Take my hand----------!!"

"Too…..ru…….!"

Our extended hand and fingers touched.

Gashaa!! We grabbed each other hands, and I strongly pulled Julie to me.

While hugging her small body, I slammed into the iron fence.

“Guh……ouch……”

“Are you okay, Tooru?”

“Aah, Julie how about you?”

“Ja--. It’s thanks to Tooru hugging me properly”

“I see. I would like to keep hugging you like this after this too but…….”

“It sounds nice but, we don’t have time to say that”

I stared at <<K>> while nodding.

“Seriously, how foolish. Someone unable to stand is just a burden and not a comrade, that’s something you should know right?”

“Foolish you say? Nooo, you’re wrong. I can continue standing up because my comrade is with me. That’s something you will never understand though!”

“…….what can you do after you stand up. Don’t tell me you seriously think you can do something in this hopeless situation?”

Hopeless------That might be true.

However, that only happens when all hope is lost.

I still have <<Power>>. A fang that is able to pierce through all that dwells in my right fist.

"Tooru……."

Julie looked at me from inside my arms.

There was no despair in her eyes.

She believes me. Even though no words came out from her, her red eyes were telling me that
Ruby eyes

"I know. Let's defeat him and head back with the chairman"

Chirin her bell rang when Julie nodded.

(***Use everything you have in your hand***. Anything is okay, just think of something…….!)

I recalled back the words Imari said-------

Something appeared in my mind the moment I recalled our reunion.

(Oh yeah, I have ***that***! I can use ***that*** in this situation!)

"……..Tooru, you thought of something?"

As expected from my <<Duo>>.

After nodding, I asked one crazy request to Julie.

"Julie. I have a request. Will you listen?"

"Ja----. I will listen to everything if it's Tooru's words"

"…….that's one crazy answer depending on the time and situation"

"-----?"

I made a small wry smile before asking Julie who was showing a mysterious expression.

"Will you fly…..for this time?"

"If Tooru wishes so-----I will fly"

It might be harsh to ask Julie this when her knees might be broken.

But even so, Julie still nodded to me.

That's because she believes in me.

"I will stop his movements for an instant. I'll leave that moment to you"

"Ja---"

kokun after hitting her forehead, Julie leaned against the handrails.

"Sorry for the wait, <<K>>. I'll let you taste this next"

I clenched my right fist and thrust it forward.

"As you like……..though, there is the condition of whether or not you can hit"

He could say that because of his confidence in his defense.

It was only natural for him to say so, since most of my attacks except hard dodging complex attacks like << Thunder speed roar Hrungnir >> did not hit him since the start of this battle.

But even so, I swore I would slam a <<Thunder Mjolnir god's strike>> to him and closed in the gaps.

Zuu…….*zuzu*…… I dragged my legs and left a trail of blood on the deck before standing in front of <<K>>.

"Fufu. You're completely covered in wounds"

"I think it goes for the both of us"

I was completely worn-out from the attacks until now but, <<K >> was in a similar state because he got hit by Julie just now.

There were scratches on the so-called <<Unit>> and it was occasionally giving off sparks.

"Let's end this, <<K>>"

I slowly took a left stance and said that.

"I wonder who will be the last one standing, you two or me-----"

[It's a match!!] [It's a match!!]

Both sides released fighting spirit and the final attack started with that as the signal.

We were the one taking the first move as usual. I was going to use << Thunder speed roar Hrungnir >> to steal the flow.

However, to <<K>> who has seen through its weakness already , he averted all of the punches by slapping it all downwards instantaneously.

(Although he's an enemy, this guy's blocking is just as expected! However-----)

"***Blocking won't be enough to beat me***, your making that face huh"

"------Gabuh!"

A counter flew to me the same time he said that.

After I got punched at the face he stomped on my foot before a severe pain ran through the leg that got stepped on.

I got punched again at that moment, and even though I supported my body from collapsing this time, I immediately rolled away from the next attack.

"I lost all my knives. And I admit, the <<Unit>>'s output has decreased. However, it's not that low until I can't kill you by punches. A fist fight contest is very inelegant but, it can't be helped in this situation though"

<<K>> talked without the assumption he was going to lose.

(Ouchh……saying all you like and acting all happy……)

Even though I was distorting my expression from pain-------I already achieved my goal.

Yes, I purposely took the hit to achieve my goal.

All of this was to stop <<K>>'s movement.

(This will probably be the only chance. Can I do it……..? No, I have to do it!!)

I clenched my fist under the <<Shield>> and stood up after steeling my resolve.

"…….I guess those are eyes showing resolve huh. I have little stamina left anyway and I thought of going out for the finish too in this situation. Fufu, I have to focus on this"

"Kuh…….!"

It was quite annoying but, our techniques, movements, mentality has been seen through by those arrow-like eyes as if everything was in his palms.

But-----***that is also the reason for our victory.***

"Correct, I will end it with this. My fist-----go ahead seeing through it if you can!!"

I roared and stepped in, and release a horizontally curved attack.

"A feint again huh?"

<<K>> remembered this attack as the feint I used during the start of the battle.

And it was the same as this time------my fist hit the air, and I rolled forward with the momentum of the punch.

But, this was the different part. Instead of a sidekick, I performed a left back blow while raising my body.

However, <<K>> saw through that attack in an instant and dodged it.

"Forming a different combination from the first-------however, it's an immature attack pattern!!"

"As expected from you…….! Then------"

The moment my back blow missed, I opened my clenched fist.

"See through this!!"

Kaa!!<<K>>'s eyes burned from the light.

"Guh, what the heck was that……!?"

The object I hid using the <<Shield>> when I stood up just now was inside my clenched fist.

The ***switch was already turned on*** the moment I showed my back to <<K>> when I rolled my body-----right after I performed the back blow.

The object I held in my fist was the armband. The reason why I took a hit on purpose was to pick up this object I threw on the deck .

Since the armband's light was brighter than the moon and glittering stars, he took a blind hit with his arrow-like eyes that could see everything.

After losing his sight for an instant, his expression distorted greatly ------and, <<K>> noticed something.

He noticed Julie was gone.

"*Tsk*, where did you…..!?"

"Julie, Goo------!!"

As if to respond to my shout, <<K>> looked up at the sky.

Over there, an unrealistic, beautiful and magical picture was there.

The angel signifying the end was dancing in the moonlight night.

Chirin After the appearing sound of the bell rang-----

Gikikiiiiiiiin!! The <<Double>> sliced through the <<Unit>>.

<<K>> staggered when a slash was formed from the tip of his shoulder to his chest.

“Not yet……I have not------“

“No, this is the end. I’ll end it with this”

I also jumped into <<K>>’s chest area the moment Julie brandished her sword.

Those sharp arrow-like eyes were staring at me in hatred.

I pulled my fist like setting an arrow and-----

The <<Thunder god’s strike (Mjolnir)>> broke the <<Unit>> and pulled down the curtains of the battle.

"Tooru, the helicopter is getting closer. I think it belongs to that person"

At the direction Julie was pointing to, I saw a helicopter giving out search lights.

"Okay then, I am sorry to say this when you are resting but, let' s go pick up the chairman"

I encouraged my over-creaking body to stand up and entered the cabin while dragging my leg.

Having been put to sleep by <<K>>, the chairman did not wake up and appear on the boat even though there was a rough battle just now; she was just sleeping soundly on the bed.

After lifting up her small body, I got shocked from her light weight.

(Does she eat? Or is a child this light?)

After exiting the cabin while paying attention not to swing around, the helicopter has reached a distance where hearing the rotor sound is possible.

The helicopter soon reached above the boat and the girl with blonde hair showed herself from the hovering machine above.

Yellow Topaz

"To----O------RU------!"

I got relieved when I found out she was safe when I saw Lilith leaning forward and swinging her hands after opening the door. Tsukimi could be seen behind her.

"Hnn……uu……"

At that moment, the black clothed girl moved her eye lids. After making several weak blinks, her eyes fully opened and the chairman talked to me in a slightly dumbfounded tone.

"Kokonoe……Tooru……..? Where is this……."

"On the boat. We are a little far away from the island though"

"I see…….. …… which means, I take it you were the one that saved me?"

I quietly swung my head to the side when she asked.

"It wasn't only me. Julie too. Also, Lilith, Imari, Tora and the others made the path for us……."

"……I understand. I am grateful to everyone. I will be indebted to you all for this matter"

"Debt, no------"

We did not save the chairman for such a reason.

Before I could tell her that, the chairman asked the next question.

"What happened to that boy?"

"Errr……..is it <<K>>? If it's him-----"

"I am over here, <<Blaze Diabolica>>-dono"

Everyone at that place concentrated their sights at the voice echoing from the bow of the boat.

"<<K>>!!"

Those arrow-like eyes were staring at us.

I thought he would be unconscious for a while because he took a clean hit from the <<Thunder Mjolnir god's strike>> but, it seems <<K>> was tougher than what I imagined.

I put down the chairman and prepared against <<K>>.

"Relax. I have no intentions to continue this battle. I don't think I have any chances of winning if I take on Miss Bristol and Tsukimi Rito in this condition"

After taking a step back, the teenager showed his light smile.

"Wait!!"

"Let him go, Kokonoe Tooru"

The chairman was the one that stopped me.

"B-but chairman……."

"I don't mind……you're <<K>> right? Nice to meet you. Please tell <<Equipment smith>>-sama I said hi"

"I understand"

After taking a deep bow, <<K>> jumped to the sea----and landed.

A submarine was there on the sea surface before I knew it.

<<K>> then disappeared together with the submarine.

"Kokonoe Tooru, and Julie=Sigtuna. I will get my payback sooner or later. Well then……"

He left those words.

"Ya-re ya-re……looks like we made a connection with one annoying guy"

"That's true. However, it won't be a problem if we get stronger before the next time we meet again"

"Haha, you got that right"

I laughed at the words that the girl beside me said----and recalled something.

I recalled back the ear-piercing sound that echoed in the battle.

And the memory of Julie moving at a speed that could be described as unusual, together with the sound.

(That sound and the Julie at that time, just what's with that……?. It's as if a beast trapped in a cage getting loose for an instant…….)

But now, the silver looks normal from what I can see.

As if the event that happened just now did not occur.

"----Tooru?"

Those red eyes (Ruby eyes) were looking at me before I noticed.

"Ah, So-sorry. I was daydreaming……..no-now that I think about this, Julie. When did you overcome your seasickness?"

"…….I forgotten about it"

I could see Julie's face color change under the search light.

Next morning------even though my wounds did not heal yet, we have to separate from Imari and the other branch school students.

"Leaving the last day aside, this one week was fun"

"Ahaha, that goes for me too. It was really great……..that I met everyone and more importantly Tooru again"

Imari and the branch school group came to the harbor to see us off.

It was very regretful to separate from the friends we made during the seaside school.

"I could not fulfill the cake promise in the end"

"Fufuu, it can't be helped in this island without any shops. Nonetheless, it doesn't change the fact it's disappointing…….. aaah, you still have 3 debts left though"

I talked to Imari who held her hands behind her head and was looking away from me.

"Oh come on. Don't make it sound like we will never meet again. I will just have to fulfill the cake promise the next time we meet, and repay the remaining 2 debts each time we meet again"

"Next time huh……."

The pony tail girl turned around with lonely eyes.

"Next time. We will meet again like this time so we will definitely meet again. At least, we can do so when we get affiliated to Dawn organization after graduation. That's why I will look forward for that day to come"

"……Mouu, oh Tooru. I won't be able to completely give up after I managed to make myself give up if you told me that"

"Give up!? O-oi, Imari. Don't give up. Our paths managed to connect so; you just have to work one step harder. We have one more year so, there are many chances to <<Level up>> right!"

I could not hide my surprise and panic when I heard that sentence come out from Imari who has a positive personality.

Imari looked at me with big wide eyes and------

She lifted the side of her lips to make a smile.

"Seriously, you sure said a carefree comment like it's just one step just because you have the qualification to graduate already. I am still <<Level 2 II>> you know"

"Oi oi it isn't carefree you know. I said it because I believe Imari will definitely become <<Level 3 III>>"

"Ahah, you sure like to say whatever you want……."

While laughing, Imari looked up at the summer skies----and said.

"But well, I have to respond to your expectations since you said it to that extent"

"If you don't want to respond to that then you can cancel off those debts you know"

"Ah, no fair! Then I will definitely sublimate to <<Level 3 III>>. So prepare yourself because I will make you treat me to a cake buffet, Tooru!"

"Wasn't it just one cake!?"

"Bubuu, you're wrong. I never said it was going to be one cake in the first place"

That might be true but, I just can't agree to that……

"Well, leaving that aside-----***see you again***, Tooru"

"Aah. See you later, Imari"

Different from just now, we swore that we will meet again, and put our fist together.

The branch school group sees off the boat while they were standing at the wharf. When we reached a point where we can no longer see them, the ten classmates at the poop deck gradually entered the ship one after another.

The last one left there were 3 people; me, Julie and Tora.

"I will go back to the cabin. Tooru, don't make a mistake and fall into the sea"

"I won't……..."

Although I replied that, there was no guarantee I won't do that when the boat makes a big shake.

My body was creaking due to <<Thunder god's strike>>[Mjolnir]'s burden. Adding on to that, there were cracks on my ribs, and a stab wound on my legs, my situation was completely far away from the word balanced.

If I really fell off then rather than laughing, I would probably be off to that world and-----even if I don't go there, I probably can't avoid getting called idiot for a while.

And with that, after I leaned against the wall and sat down with my legs freely put forward, towards the same direction the boat was heading to, Julie *chokon* sat beside me too.

"Julie. The salty wind might harm your wounds if you stay for too long so, you don't have to force yourself just because you are my <<Duo>>"

"Nai. That goes for you too when it comes to injuries. And it's not because I am your <<Duo>> that I am with you, it's because I just want to be beside Tooru……..also, I think I will get seasick if I head back immediately"

The last sulky mumble made me spurt out laughing.

"You're evil, Tooru. It's a big problem for me……."

"Hahaa, Sorry sorry. I'll lend you my shoulder as an apology so forgive me"

"…….nai, I prefer your lap"

"Lap? Well I don't mind……."

"Ja---. Then I will accept the offer"

Julie lay down her body and used my lap as a pillow.

"Good night, Julie"

When I patted on the head of the girl that looks like a small animal, she closed her eyes comfortably.

I continued looking at the island turning smaller while patting on her silky Silver hair.
Silver Blonde

"…….Tooru"

"You're not sleeping? I think you will feel more comfortable doing so you know"

"Ja---. But, I need to ask something before that"

Just when I thought what it is, she threw me a question.

"If……..if Imari was accepted to the main school then-----will Tooru form a <<Duo>> with her?"

"With Imari?"

If Imari fought someone else other than me, she might have been accepted to the main school.

But------there was no if's.

Everything in front of me is important now.

But even so, I guess I have some free time to imagine at least.

"That's true……she might be a good friend, and good rival. But------I will only team up with Julie if I have to team with a girl"

"Tooru……."

The girl right now getting spoiled by the lap pillow I am giving her.

I extended my hand out to this girl out of my own will.

"Even if Imari gets to enroll into the main school-----I will still take Julie's hand"

"……..It's somehow embarrassing. It's embarrassing but------"

Even though I could not see her expression, Julie was probably making a smile.

"I am very happy"

It seems she was satisfied with my answer and I rubbed the silver girls head.

“Let’s drink apple tea when we get back”

“Ja---♪“

Inside the view with the sea, sky and clouds-----

While hearing the endless sound of the waves, I was thinking about one girl.

It was not the silver girl sleeping on my lap nor was it the ponytail girl I swore to meet again.

The hard-working, but shy and reserved girl.

The girl that fell in love with someone like me.

I continuously thought about the girl I hurt over and over again.

Epilogue

Part 1

"Oh yeah, Miyabi stay here and rest, I will go and buy some soft cream……..don't worry about me. I rest everyday so, I have to walk around or I won't be satisfied"

After half-forcing her roommate and <<Duo>> to rest on the bench, Tomoe pushed through the crowd while she was in crutches.

(This is tough…….)

Tomoe made a small sigh when was walking.

Of course, it was to Miyabi.

Although she took her out to get her spirits up even if it's a little , it ended up forcing her to act spirited and that made Tomoe regret this.

Tomoe did not ask what happened between her and Tooru on that day.

However, Tomoe could guess something was up judging by the attitude Miyabi was displaying by evading Tooru.

No matter how dense she was in love issues, after being told 2,3 times that Miyabi was not feeling good, and does not want to see Tooru when he came over to meet her, it was obvious Tomoe would get something was off.

(It would be nice if there is something I can help with for these two…….)

Even though she doesn't know how much help she could be since she was unfamiliar with love issues, Tomoe thought of wanting to do something for her close friends.

But as long as she knows something occurred between these two during the seaside school, she thought things would get even more complicated if she moved around recklessly.

That's why for now Tooru and Miyabi------she prayed that both her friends would return back to how it used to.

And at the same time, wished their relationship would be better than before.

(I think those two will match nicely. Fufuu)

After imagining both of them cuddling together In happiness, Tomoe naturally smiled but----

Zukiri

(-----? What was that…….)

Pain ran through her chest for some reason.

Tomoe deluded herself by telling herself that her heart was in pain because her precious friend was feeling down.

Tachibana Tomoe was dense.

Because of that, she has once again failed to notice the chance to know about her heart, which was starting to get attracted to that boy.

Around the time Tomoe mixed in with the crowd, Miyabi continued staring at her back-----and soon, she faced downwards.

(She was being considerate to me……..)

Miyabi felt sorry to Tomoe who brought her out to cheer up even though her injuries were not healed yet.

When she looked at the people walking in front with a dazed look, they looked very happy to her.

The scene of family, friends and couples laughing together was something cruel for Miyabi now.

Jiwari tears appeared and she rubbed her eyes which were looking downwards.

Tooru's face he made on that day was still stuck on her mind.

(Why am I causing trouble for the person I like…….)

She caused trouble to the kind boy she loved by confessing to him.

She caused unnecessary trouble to the boy she loved who always tries to cheer her up.

And more importantly, there was a big scar left on Miyabi when Tooru was very close to losing his life because of that.

What's more, it happened twice.

In the a la mode and the seaside school too, she caused trouble to Tooru by always getting protected by him.

Her chest was close to bursting open from fear when she thought of the possibility of losing someone precious----as the worst result formed by having that precious person protect her weak and useless self.

The inerasable regrets kept pilling on top of each other one after another until it accumulated in a great number and----not long later, it started to spill out.

"It would be nicer if I was stronger……."

If she had the power enough to not become a burden, she thought Tooru's life won't be exposed to any danger but, Miyabi spilled over.

(However, it's impossible for me no matter how much I work hard…….)

Miyabi thought this in her deeply sunk heart.

"……..I wonder what it means to be stronger?"

Miyabi got surprised by the sudden call out.

An old man with a gentle smile was sitting beside her before she knew it.

"E-errr……you heard me?"

"I heard a little bit"

Miyabi got a little attracted to the old man who was showing a * nipaa* smile while facing his thumb and index finger together.

Her house was an inn so quite a number of old couples would visit the inn throughout the year and even though she was bad with the opposite sex, she was not that bad with old men. Particularly, old men with gentle air around them.

That's why Miyabi continued talking to the old man without being cautious while at the same time feeling embarrassed.

"Errrr……I-is that so. I want to be stronger……"

Although Miyabi was choosing her words, she told him about the problems she was causing to her friends and precious person and, about the fact she wants to become stronger to stop causing any troubles to them but it was completely futile.

The old man did not deny nor consent, and just borrowed his ears while providing good answers.

Soon, Miyabi regained her composure and made a powerless smile.

"Ahaha……I am sorry for making a stranger hear my grumbles….."

"I don't mind. It's sometimes important to let out the things inside"

The old man laughed.

"By the way, Ojou-san. Judging by that talk----I think you can become stronger"

"I-is that true…..?"

"Umu. People who know their own weakness can definitely become stronger"

"*Giggle*, thank you very much, ojii-san. I think I cheered up a little. It would be nice if that happens though……."

"Fuhaha, I guarantee that"

The old man laughed.

From a bystander, that was not a laugh from a gentle old man but rather a laugh from a devil.

And right now, the devil was charming a girl with his honey sweet words.

"Ojou-san, let me give you the chance. But it depends if you want <<Power>> from the bottom of your heart"

Miyabi didn't know.

The person's <<Soul>> is needed as sacrifice to a devil's whisper.

Because of that, the girl lent her ears to the devil-----and finally nodded.

"Then, let me bestow upon this-----The <<Power>> of <<
God's Destruction soldier
Ell.Libel >> to you"

Translation Notes and References

Prologue:

1. ↑ Flowing water

Chapter 1:

1. ↑ Kumite is the part of karate in which a person trains against an adversary.
2. ↑ Desuka is used for politeness.

Chapter 2:

1. ↑ (really/Oh gosh); a pretty popular term in light novels and manga
2. ↑ The island like a cauldron/bowl where the cliffs are the sides of the bowl and inside a hollow depression.

Chapter 3:

1. ↑ Kendo posture-holding the sword above the head
2. ↑ Grinning noh mask, devil mask

Chapter 5:

1. ↑ 女-Girls.He is referring to the in the which means child. He is basically calling someone in the group a woman
2. ↑ AMAZING
3. ↑ A judo move where the user would slide to the opponent and lock the opponent between the legs

Chapter 6:

1. ↑ A Kenpou-style with the principle of "Soft" to overcome the jujitsu weakness such as thrust and kicks
2. ↑ http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/High-altitude_military_parachuting